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Survive and thrive

No English, no connections, no job. Eight years later Martha Nino runs a successful magazine and consults on immigration.

By Meryl Olmstead

When the going gets tough, the tough get going: that's how the cliché goes. But the life of 36-year-old Colombian immigrant Martha Nino is far from a cliché. With courage, doggedness and resourceful marshalling of her considerable skills, she has realized more than one dream since she arrived here eight years ago. She is not only surviving in Canada, she is thriving.

Nino landed at Toronto's Pearson airport in January 2001 accompanied by her eight-year-old daughter Alejandra and immediately applied for refugee status. With almost no English and no connections here, she was grief-stricken by the recent kidnapping, torture and murder of her husband Rodolfo, a pilot.

Rodolfo had been hunted down by the militant wing of a Marxist insurgent group called FARC, the Revolutionary Armed Force of Colombia. Nino realized she had to flee her native country after she began receiving anonymous letters demanding money and threatening the life of her daughter.

As for choosing Canada, Nino says, "It was love at first sight. We found a beautiful country with kind people, a peaceful environment

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From the editor

Ah, summer! (What summer? you ask.) One of its blessings is that summer often frees up the possibility to read just for the love of it. And it's often the happy accident of discovery that makes the exercise so gratifying, for as Forrest Gump's momma always reminded him about a box of chocolates, "You never know what you're gonna get."

For example, I happened upon an excerpt from a recent book by Adam Gopnik titled *Through the Children's Gate – A Home in New York*. Knowing that this issue of *Contact* contains two substantial articles related to the internet and communications technology, Gopnik's humorous take on Instant Messaging caught my eye.

> Had the instant message come first, and the telephone conversation second, what a triumphant technological breakthrough the phone call would now seem!
>
> How proudly the papers would unveil it, how breathlessly the business pages and *Wired* magazine would celebrate the innovation. Real-time conversation!
>
> Actual voices! Effortless dial-up-and speak communication! No need to wear out your fingers just to say hello, how are you! At last, the realm of the real voice...Steve Jobs would hold a press conference, holding the phone up high, with amazement.
>
> And the next day the back page of the business pages would have one of those defiant, declarative full-page ads: "Real speech! Real time! The Real You." It would be on the cover of all the newsmagazines the following week. (And there would be contrarian op-ed pieces in the *Times*: "Why I Will Never Make a 'Phone Call"; "The 'Phone Call'— Is It Killing the Keyboard?")

In our lead article this time, "Survive and Thrive," **Meryl Olmstead** throws the spotlight on a remarkable young woman, **Martha Nino**, who found in Canada a refuge from death threats and the kidnap and murder of her husband in her native country. With courage and determination Nino not only reestablished herself here in her beloved legal profession but ventured into publishing, becoming the publisher of the highly successful Spanish-language magazine, *Abanico (the fan)*.

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Contact us

Contact welcomes articles of general interest to association members, including announcements, reports, articles, calls for papers and news items. Deadlines are Jan. 30, Apr.30 and June 30.

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Our three technology contributors, **Patricia Glogowski** and co-authors **John Allan** and **Stephen Roney** resist the temptation to lionize the latest computer applications in language education, giving us instead thoughtful and balanced analyses of their uses, with appropriate caveats. Their articles, "Look Out Language Teachers" and "Virtual Learning Environments: Second Life" make useful reading for all ESL teachers, giving us enough information to make important decisions about recent technological developments and their potential in computer-assisted language learning.

A pair of *In the Classroom* features in this issue are chock full of teaching ideas. **Roz Maian** makes a strong case for using classic literature, whether abridged or not, to teach communication, not just language, in our ESL classrooms. She provides a cornucopia of sources and resources to encourage teachers to incorporate literary novels, poetry and video as part of their instructional repertoire. Similarly, regular contributor **Judy Pollard Smith** invites instructors to use picture postcards as a practical source of language learning activities, especially in writing, speaking and vocabulary acquisition.

Classroom texts from Cambridge University Press's *In Use* series, on collocations and phrasal verbs, are reviewed in this issue. In the first, **Evelyn Pedersen** favorably reviews the 60 teaching units of *English Collocations in Use*, pinpointing how they help second language students come to grips with word combinations such as *take out a mortgage*, *do research*, and *get a handle on* that often stymie language learners on their own. With plenty of humorous examples, she proves just how prevalent — and useful — collocations are in our language, revealing how words work together to produce fluent and natural English.

In the second review, **Tania Pattison** praises **Michael McCarthy** and **Felicity O'Dell,** the authors of *English Phrasal Verbs in Use*, for helping learners make sense of the thickets of unusual multi-word verbs in our language. By uncovering the usage of 1,000 common English phrasal verbs, from *allow for* to *zoom out*, the authors bring order to chaos. With few exceptions, the accompanying activities in this book help even advanced level EAP students acquire fluency in their speaking and understanding, whether studying on their own or in classrooms.

Contributing to the theme of using literary sources for language learning, **Robert Courchêne** provides a thoughtful excursion into fairy tales as he explores the universal theme of Cinderella. His article provides a wealth of cultural information about Japanese and Aboriginal Canadian versions of the tale, and suggests a wide range of classroom language learning activities for both adults and children.

For many teachers, becoming culturally informed is an important part of their professional growth. To that end, **Sandra Garcia** reviews writer-director **Deepa Mehta's** most recent feature film, *Heaven on Earth*, set in the snowy suburb of Brampton. This controversial and dramatic portrayal of domestic abuse and cultural estrangement uncovers a social ill that the director claims is more common than we think. Mehta's artful mix of reality and fantasy grips the viewer from beginning to end, lending weight to her growing reputation as one of Canada's finest filmmakers.

As always, we are indebted to all the contributors to *Contact*. Their dedication to the call of professional development in our field nourishes our imaginations as much as it guides our growth. A special word of thanks is owed Bob Courchêne and others whose guidance and continuing interest make the task of editing *Contact* a real pleasure. We hope you will find its content stimulating and professionally worthwhile. ■

-Clayton Graves

Survive and Thrive (cont'd. from page 1)

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and equal opportunities for everyone." The promise of safety for herself and her daughter (now a self-assured trilingual 16-year-old), and Canada's modern outlook all helped her make the momentous decision.

Nino had come from a well-established family in a small town in Colombia. Her father was a business executive and devout Catholic, and saw to it that Martha received a good education at the Universidad Catolica of Colombia, where she received her law degree in 1992. Following graduation, she did two post-graduate studies in tax law and management and even authored a 10-volume compendium on Colombian tax legislation.

Nino's early days in Canada were like those of many foreign-educated professionals. She survived by cleaning houses, selling flowers and delivering newspapers. Now residing in Milton, Ontario, she was able to return to her profession in 2004, and currently practices as part of a team at the class action law firm of Rochon Genova in Toronto.

There she serves as a link to thousands of Hispanics, assisting them in their immigration and resettlement in Canada. She also represents the firm in Latin America. In fact, her work takes her regularly back to South America to conferences for business professionals interested in immigrating to Canada. She has written articles on immigration for several Hispanic media forums, including newspapers, magazines and internet sites on themes such as how to integrate smoothly into the new society, master the necessary skills in business relations and come to understand Canadian culture.

The flip side of that coin, of course is her desire to acquaint Canadians with her native country, so often negatively portrayed in our media. Another goal is to encourage Hispanics already here and building successful lives to connect with new arrivals and ease their transition into the new culture.

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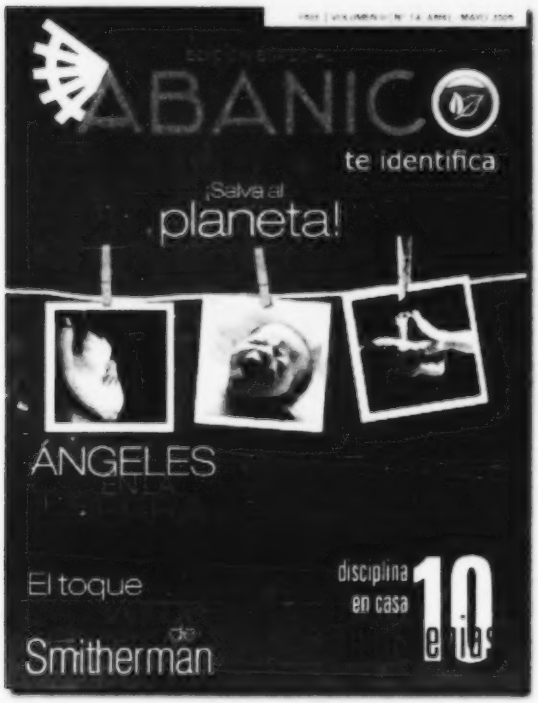
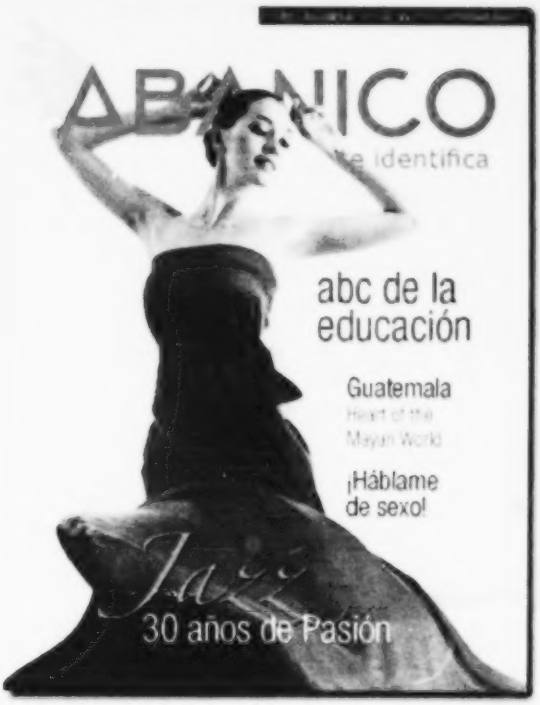
Martha Nino Voted One of Canada's Top 25 Immigrants

May 4, 2009 Martha Nino is congratulated by *Canadian Immigrant* magazine publisher Nick Noorani and Canada's Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism, Jason Kenney.

Martha Nino was chosen one of the Top 25 Canadian Immigrants of 2009 in *Canadian Immigrant* magazine's first ever people's choice awards between February and April. The awards aim to celebrate the achievements of immigrants who have positively contributed to Canadian society. More than 10,000 readers voted in the poll.





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But Nino's newest enterprise—and her passion—is the bi-monthly magazine *Abanico,* of which she is the owner and publisher. It's an ad-rich, glossy and graphically striking lifestyle periodical whose name in English means 'the fan'.

Accessible both online and in hard copy format, *Abanico* has developed an audience across Canada, and even includes special features for Albertans and Quebecers, with occasional pieces in French. For English-speakers there are also articles on tourism, especially to Hispanic destinations. One of her dreams is to have a completely bilingual magazine within a few years.

Abanico covers a range of themes, from health and psychology to family issues such as spousal abuse, women's equality and raising troubled teens. Each issue introduces readers to Spanish cultures around the world and covers topics such as technology, economics, communications and business. Abanico also contains articles on culture, with features on music, films, literature, and even recipes. It's rich in detail, attractive, eye-

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catching and *au courant*.

Catching up with Martha Nino, *Abanico*'s busy publisher, was not easy, but we did manage to corral her for a short Q and A conversation, just back from Australia. Our interview included some interesting takes on learning English.

CONTACT: What do you remember about your first days in Canada?

Martha Nino: Snowing and snowing. It was amazing and a very beautiful new experience for us. My daughter and I ran to play in the snow and tried to make a snowman like you see in the movies.

C: When you arrived you had only a little English. Can you tell me how you learned the language?

MN: I am still learning, believe me! I first went to an English school in Mississauga and later had the opportunity to go to Sheridan College for one 2-month session.

C: Do you remember your teachers?

MN: All of them! And I continue to remember them even now, especially their patience and dedication. I remember Mimosa and Connie at Burnhamthorpe and Central Parkway, and Maureen and Anna and John at Sheridan. And Brian Stein was my Co-op mentor. It's thanks to him that I got my first job in Canada.

C: Do you have any special expressions and favorite words in English?

MN: Yes. I always say to myself, "Whatever you do, do your best" and other expressions like, "Oh, nice!" and "It's unbelievable!"

C: Are there any English words that give you difficulty even now?

MN: Many! My English is my Achilles heel, but I converted this weakness into a strength because I found a job where most of my time I interact with Spanish speakers. However, I dream of one day waking up thinking, dreaming and speaking English. I would also like to find someone that wants to learn Spanish and is willing to teach me English.

C: At home do you and Alejandra speak one language or do you switch from Spanish to English?

MN: We speak Spanish, because I think that for immigrant children it's important to preserve their native

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tongue. So at home I sacrifice my English. Also, I don't want Alejandra to lose her roots with Colombia or our family because of miscommunication.

C: If someone asked you, 'What's the best way to learn a language?', what would you say?

MN: Find more friends who speak that language and always try to speak it without feeling shy.

C: What about Canadians who want to learn Spanish?

MN: The same thing. Find Spanish friends and talk. And, of course, read *Abanico*. It will help them learn about our culture and countries and become informed. They should try to visit a Spanish-speaking country, too. They will get real-life classes, for free!

C: Sometimes ESL teachers ask students to bring publications from their first language to the class and talk about them, in English. Do you think it helps their English?

MN: Yes, I think it's a good idea. And, of course, I always keep my Spanish-English dictionary by my side. ■

Martha meets a Mountie

Meryl Olmstead's interests include the role of technology in second language learning, popular culture in the classroom and immigration and settlement issues for newcomers to Canada.

Look out language teachers: The Web 2.0 genie is out of the bottle!

By John Allan and Stephen Roney

This "tag cloud" is meant to summarize the salient points of Web 2.0, based on a talk by Web guru Tim O'Reilly. (Markus Angermeier, 2005)

In the Spring 2009 issue of *Contact* the article "*Technology Overload for Language Teachers*" by John Allan described the frustration with digital tools that many of us feel as instructors. However, it may nevertheless be useful for teachers to be acquainted with the new offerings from the Web 2.0 movement. These go beyond simple blogs, podcasts and wikis. Web 2.0 embodies the amazing creative genius of thousands of dedicated developers combined with the contributions of millions of users on the Internet. Many of these resources can be applied to the language-teaching situation.

The countless adaptations make it difficult to comprehend the field's vast potential at this time.

So what, exactly, is Web 2.0? The Internet is now the favoured platform for development of dynamic resources. Web 2.0 can be defined as a new set of resources on the Internet resulting from powerful new scripting languages such as Ajax. But that's for true nerds.

It may be more prudent for us to concentrate on the visible characteristics of these assets and get on with trying to integrate them into our instruction.

Web 2.0 sites are novel in that they rely on the community of users to contribute and develop content. Thus, they are, among other things, truly social gathering spaces. In the words of *The Economist* magazine's longtime Silicon Valley correspondent, "these new applications and services inherently lend themselves to collaboration, sharing and participation." (*The Economist*, March 19, 2009)

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Students are more engaged when they are creating or contributing media for an authentic audience. Indisputable examples of this are: augmenting an entry in Wikipedia, authoring a blog, commenting on an online video, rating a photograph or contributing to an on line community map.

Web 2.0 sites share ten characteristics. These common attributes are association, community, interaction, contribution, tagging, fuzzy logic, multi-site distribution, marketing, rich medium of focus, and personalization. This pluralistic functionality is usually within reach of a single screen due to the nature of the contemporary design. While these common characteristics are individually obvious, it is worth mentioning these as they define the basics of a contemporary web resource for the end user. It is important to create awareness of these for students as well as instructors. This will make using these resources, as well as understanding new offerings, less complicated than it may seem.

Association

Most resources have a sign up process to obtain membership. At this time, this is usually free. As the marketplace becomes more competitive, however, some of these complimentary sites may add charges for their basic services. Given that users produce content, they add value as they add users. It might always be counter-productive to charge—and lose authors.

The greater danger, perhaps, is that some of these sites may disappear as the current economic slump cuts advertising revenue. These sites do not generate a great deal of spam email or harass members. That is not where they get their revenue. They simply allot space for members to contribute or create with responsibility. Since the site manager knows who the members are, they can control both content and behavior at the resource.

Community

The resources described later in this article use the community or communities that emerge to influence these sites. Communities can facilitate a class in three ways. First, students benefit from an authentic audience for their language learning. Second, they profit from the media generated by the greater community. Third, if appropriate, the class can interact on a variety of levels with the community. Teachers can generally still decide to "garden gate" the resource by setting up a closed community within the resource while utilizing the media and functionality of the site.

Rich Medium of focus

For now, each Web 2.0 site tends to present (display) a medium of focus. **YouTube**'s is the streaming video, **Flickr**'s is the photograph, **Blogger**'s is the written text and **IPodder**'s is the audio file. On some sites, the medium of focus is supported by other media such as **VoiceThread**'s use of a visual focal point that is surrounded by audio, pictures and text. It is the instructor's task to ensure that the students recognize the heart of the resource. This is probably a transitory phenomenon, not something intrinsic to the Web 2.0 model. Over the long term, the future is multimedia—it is just this that the Web makes possible.

Interactivity

Interactivity with the resource or with other members of the community is a signal feature of these sites. Whether it is playing a game, creating a game, taking a short quiz, making a short quiz, commenting on a blog or blogging, additions to stress interactivity in contemporary authoring tools facilitate end user interactivity. Many sites, such as **Digg**, have the community vote to rank the media presented. The language teacher can use reflective comments on the medium of focus to lead to exchanges with other members of the community. These authentic interactions can be monitored, recorded and assessed.

Contribution

Most of these sites allow uploading of media. Media can take the form of video,

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animation, text, audio, photographs, drawings and images, interactive games, quizzes, polls—the full panoply of human communication. The ability to contribute media is extremely powerful. Students can use the tools available on the Internet or their workstation to create media that can add to the community's wealth. These can be critically assessed by other members of the class, or indeed the online community, as well as augmented in some cases to improve the digital district. Language instructors can include technical information and arts teachers can assist in developing media to be posted to a Web 2.0 community. These can be the focal point of a language activity through commenting via text, poll, or voice file.

Marketing

Advertising, often considered the foe of education, has found another way into schools. Clever advertisements are strategically placed on these Web 2.0 pages, and are the chief reason that there are insignificant or no registration costs for these remarkable resources. Educators should ensure that their students are aware of the techniques that advertisers use to promote their wares on Web 2.0 sites.

Tagging

In order to facilitate faster searches, Web 2.0 sites make the most of "tags" or keywords for the media housed at their sites. These can be computer-generated or produced by "wetware" (i.e. humans) at the time of contribution or uploading. Tags attached to media files also facilitate fuzzy logic that allows some Web 2.0 resources to magically predict end users' interests.

Multi-site Distribution

A powerful attribute of Web 2.0 resources is that many of them offer seamless communication with each other for the signed-in end user. This means that a user of Facebook can directly access his or her photos on Flickr or create a feed from their blog on Blogger, which can show streaming images of their favourite YouTube videos, and so forth.

Fuzzy Logic

Not, as it might seem, the result of drinking too much peach schnapps, fuzzy logic is a way of finessing binary logic into something approaching human thought. Fuzzy logic allows Web 2.0 applications to add each new bit of information it obtains from the user community, or a particular user, to a probability model which allows it, gradually, to get better and better at predicting the user's or users' wants and needs. When you log in to Amazon.ca, for example, it immediately suggests new products it hopes you might want to buy. Last.fm, a music site, notes the tracks you listen to and suggests other artists you might like. Google tracks your web search preferences, and targets its clients' ads accordingly.

Personalized Space

The final attribute of Web 2.0 resources we will look at is the ability to customize a web space. Most allow members options for look and feel through backgrounds, font types, media organization through categories or channels, media sizing, titling, privilege management and tagging of media.

Here are eleven Web 2.0 resources available to the language teacher at this time, giving some idea of the broad range of activities that can be turned into learning opportunities by the savvy ESL instructor.

Mind42 is browser-based, collaborative, mind mapping software available at www.mind42.com.

Mind maps allow the visual representation of relationships between terms through links, lists, and categorizations. It is an ideal tool for brainstorming. Students can create

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these sorts of illustrations using pencils, but without the ability to quickly change tack. They can create them using software, but at a price. Or they can create them free and dynamically with an online resource such as Mind42.

Additional activities can enhance the primary activity to improve comprehension and communicative skills. Mind maps also allow the learners to apply their visual skills to recognize a concept or concepts.

Mind42 offers two levels of membership. The basic membership allows all of the functionality that an ESL teacher and student would require, including online collaboration and publishing.

Teachers should explore the resource before using it with their students as it offers many features, such as adding notes, a variety of templates, online publishing to the community, flexible node functions, and the insertion of pictures or hyperlinks. If the goal is to create a basic and shareable mind map with or without collaboration within the class or Internet community, this is a useful tool.

voicethread

Voicethread is a common web space that allows people to discuss the medium of focus., at http://www.voicethread.com.

The medium of focus can be videos, drawings, photographs, text documents, and presentations. The community can comment or annotate using a telephone, web camera, microphone, by typing text and uploading files. While recording a commentary on Voicethread, the individual can also draw on the original medium of focus to clearly illustrate their viewpoint. The Voicethread browser-based collaborative discussion resource is available at www.voicethread.com.

Applications for English as a second language include listening exercises and reading exercises, both aided by illustrations if desired, as well as the writing and speaking exercise of commenting on posted media—and then commenting on other comments. This becomes a very natural, realistic linguistic dialogue. Voicethread is a rich resource that is motivating through the diversity of existing media, and offers as well the potential to create an infinite number of new discussions, based on an individual's ideas or a classes' task or a learner's personal interests.

Voicethread requires a full membership in order to create a space with media to be discussed. Teachers and students must also sign up in order to comment. General access allows one only to view the media and listen and read the comments of others.

TeacherTube
Teach the World

TeacherTube is a relatively safe area that teachers can use to deliver and contribute video, slideshows or animated mixed media content, at http://teachertube.com/.

On the model of YouTube, TeacherTube collects, categorizes and dispenses rich media to members and the general public. It uses tags provided by the contributor as well as channels for quick searches on specific topics.

Perhaps its greatest value is that TeacherTube offers a "safe zone" for educators to guide their students to relevant activities. Because TeacherTube.com is outside the confines of YouTube, a teacher can be assured that unwanted or inappropriate content is unlikely to appear on students' screens during computer lab sessions. Teachers should be aware that there is also a TeacherTube channel inside YouTube; but this is not the safest manner to access TeacherTube content, as it allows quick access to the whole of YouTube, and therefore educators should access TeacherTube resources though TeacherTube.com only.

Studenta can access and view all the content without a membership account. However, they must be a member in order to comment, discuss, add friends, or upload video to the TeacherTube site. ESL teachers can profitably use streaming video for tutorials,

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lectures, just-in-time training, writing, listening, sequencing, current events and even drama.

There are of course many other streaming video sources on the Web. Social video sites include VIMEO, Google Video, MetaCafe, and perhaps of greatest interest, YouTubeEDU (http://www.youtube.com/edu), featuring college-level content. Even more convenient is ESLvideo.com (http://www.eslvideo.com/), which allows a teacher to generate a simple quiz based on an existing video. This is the area where Web 2.0 and streaming media will excel in the coming months.

Ask500people is a visually diverse polling resource that promotes discussion on line and in the traditional classroom, online at http://www.ask500people.com.

Polling can stimulate conversation as a pre- or post- activity on any topic. Ask500people allows the students to have a worldwide audience to react to their questions. Questions such as, "Is recycling important in your city?" or statements like "Democracy is a good system of government" can generate up to 500 responses. Data is reported in a single window in a variety of possible forms: by location, with responses shown on a map, as a graph, by gender, by age, by income, and by education, based on each member's data. Some of this data may be misleading, though, since non-members can vote based on their IP connection. It tends to produce a pretty good spread of world opinion: the question currently featured on its home page shows respondents from every continent except Antarctica.

ESL teachers can use this data for projects, reports, comparisons, chart-reading practice, categorization, discussion topics, or writing tasks for their students. The visual data can be printed in digital documents. As well, there are ranking and comment functions on this site, enabling further interaction with the global community on any given issue being discussed in class.

Slideshare is a community-based resource for sharing electronic slide presentations such as from PowerPoint, at http://www.slideshare.net/.

For educators of English, this resource has four powerful applications. The first is to locate and learn from teaching peers concepts and practical strategies for teaching. The second is as a source of slide shows that might be useful in your own class. The third is to create lectures, visuals, prompts or guides for use in your classroom or school. The fourth is to use it as an international platform for your students to show their work. Make that five powerful applications: the institution can also use it as a means of promoting special events.

Slideshare offers storage, archiving and worldwide retrieval of stored presentations. Presentations can include all media types that can be embedded in a PowerPoint slide. In addition, Slideshare allows an author to add an audio track to a preexisting presentation—one can, for example, record the full lecture along with the slides. Teachers or students can make their presentations private, choose individual members or groups (the class) who have permission to view it, or make it open to the public.

Non-members can view Slideshare presentations, but are not allowed to download the original files, upload their own files or join groups. The community is growing so quickly that teachers will soon be able to locate slide shows related to every topic they require at this site.

Delicious, found at http://delicious.com/, is a social bookmarking site that allows

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users to organize and store their web resources at a central web-based source. Organizing includes tagging, saving, classifying and sharing favourite web pages. This is a global extension of the "bookmarks" or "favorites" options on your Internet browser. Instead of just bookmarking a resource for your own use, Delicious gives you the option of sharing your favorite sites with the world. And, in the spirit of social communities, you also have access to the bookmarks of the rest of the community. Many find the benefit of having access to your bookmarks at all times its best advantage. It does not matter whether you are at home, at the office, or in a small café in Budapest—all your links are there.

ESL teachers may simply wish to use this as a means of acquiring great resources from peers in education or from friends who have common hobbies or interests. However, it is also an amazing means of teaming students together for a common goal of locating and sharing resources on a topic. These can in turn be offered to other school sections or larger communities to create a larger repository for subject matter areas on the Internet. A local application is to have the students create digital resources, book reviews, Internet pages, or image collections, and add these to a Delicious space for a pubic or private presentation.

Forvo is a pronunciation guide as well as a pronunciation modeling resource that embodies all of the characteristics of Web 2.0 resources. It is at www.forvo.com.

Forvo has advanced compatibility with mobile devices such as cell phones and personal data assistants. The global community contributes to the corpus of Forvo. As of April 2009, it holds over 135,000 pronounced words in 213 languages, including, of course, Klingon.

There are currently 207,000 words listed (some are not yet pronounced). It gives an easy-to-read profile of the vital statistics of each language (Kazakh, for example, has eight million speakers).

If no native speaker has yet registered a pronunciation of a given word, then Forvo requests your input. Inputting your voice also involves entering data such as gender and geographic region. The Forvo community then votes on the pronunciation and can report if the pronunciation is inauthentic. This is, of course, a useful check on quality.

Because it traces the speaker's place of origin, it is possible to demonstrate distinctions among various English geographical dialects: Yorkshire, Newfoundland, Singapore, Chennai, New Orleans.

Forvo also classifies the pronounced words into various categories, such as "occupations," or "transitive verbs." This offers the ESL teacher the opportunity to assign set blocks of words or terms for study. Students can use the targeted list to practice their listening and pronunciation. The categories range from grammatical forms, idioms, genres such as 'fast food joint jargon', 'male names' and 'geographical regions'.

Anyone can search and listen to the extensive database of pronunciations. Only registered users can download all of these files, create pronunciations, rate pronunciations and create a personalized page of pronunciation files for further practice —or to assign for study.

Picnik is a relatively new resource that is the most recent incarnation of the web-based image editor. Despite the name, image editors also allow one to create original works. Students and teachers can use this tool freely. Picnik can be used for free. The premium option allows for visually spectacular filters and functionality; however the complimentary functions far surpass the requirements of a language-learning lesson. Picnik is online at www.picnik.com.

Creating images or optimizing photographs was a core requirement for teachers creating worksheets and assessments

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even before the desktop publishing revolution in the eighties. Picnik allows educators to construct more interesting paper-based or digital learning opportunities for their students. Beyond practical image editing, students can use it to construct collages, scrapbooks and cards to tell a bigger story.

Picnik also talks to or interfaces with a myriad of Web2.0 community-based resources such as Flickr, Photobucket, FaceBook, MySpace, Picasa and many more, including blogging resources. In a class blogging situation, many photos must be cropped, resized, possibly rotated and colour corrected to meet the requirements of the visual space for presentation.

The only caveat to Picnik is that it requires real-time access to the Internet for use. This might be challenging for institutions with limited bandwidth and workstation access.

.docstoc

Docstoc is a professional-document-sharing community, at www.docstoc.com.

Teachers globally now have a growing archive of useable documents to assist them with lesson preparation and administrative tasks. As members, educators can avail themselves of hundreds of thousands of digital documents, from portal document files through pdfs to excel spreadsheets.

We recommend the free membership in this community, as it allows downloading, not just viewing, of documents, uploading your contributions, reviewing, bookmarking within the resource, rating and managing your documents and ones that you feel are helpful to your goals. We recommend this resource to assist teachers with their lessons, worksheets and possibly administrative duties.

At a quick glance, the ESL category has several documents on the IELTS, documents covering most common grammar points, and such exotica as "A Freudian Approach Towards Vocabulary Building." This is a new community that has the promise of becoming a rich and accessible compendium of resources for teachers.

eHow™

Ehow is an online community based on the concept of pooling knowledge about how to do everything! EHow is at http://www.ehow.com.

This resource is akin to a do-it-yourself encyclopedia which has escaped the workroom and the garage to advise also on such matters as "How to Dress for College," "How to Be Happy," or "How to Forget about an Ex." Great even for the idly curious, wondering how anything at all is done.

The resource includes several sections with special functionality. Especially relevant for learning are the "HowTos" (written articles), video, resources (advice on purchases) and community sections. This site is not just promising for the future: it is already bursting with useful teaching aids. Within each "HowTo" entry the focus is a step-by-step procedure (want something to teach the imperative?) that can be viewed at the site, copied to another medium, or printed for use in the classroom. Following this is a "Tips & Warnings" section in a more aphoristic form, then a section for reader comments.

Here you can find such gems as "How to Plan an ESL Valentine's Day Lesson." In the videos section there is a "HowTo" video on "Using Commas." Membership is not required to search and view these great resources. However, formal association with this site allows a person to have all of the functionality associated with a Web 2.0 resource.

Abc Writeboard™

Writeboard is simply a very easy-to-use wiki. There are many similar resources on the web and they offer roughly the same functionality as Writeboard. Try it at www.writeboard.com.

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A wiki is a collaborative digital document that is created, posted, altered and enhanced by the subscribing community. Teachers can designate groups in their class or whole classes to work together on projects in Writeboard.

One of the issues with wikis is that editing requires the use of simple tags, which must be taught to users. There are only a few to learn: B is bold, U is underline, and so forth. Digital natives, under-30s, will already be aware of these conventions and will most likely be contributing nuances to the wiki as the projects proceed.

Wikis are best used for brainstorming or collaborative writing. Other media, such as images and videos, can be inserted into the presentation, as it is essentially a simple web page.

Conclusion

As demonstrated above, there are numerous innovative activities available on the Internet. Communities such as Docstoc, ehow, Writeboard, Picnik, VoiceThread, Forvo, Delicious, SlideShare, Mind42, Ask500People and TeacherTube provide potential learning objects for students, teachers and administrators with flexibility unheard of only a few years ago. These resources provide writing, reading, listening, pronunciation, social communication, creative and speaking opportunities.

The cost of these dynamic and engaging tools is usually only a free registration process and tolerance of advertising at the sites. These resources are virtually redefining the discipline of computer-assisted language learning--even language teaching itself! The learner now has more power, more creativity and more chance for interaction with the broader community outside of the traditional classroom. This issue will be analyzed in our next *Contact* article.

Web 2.0 resources represent a daunting situation for the ESL instructor in the computer-assisted language-learning lab. There is no possible way that an ESL teacher can be an expert in all of the Web 2.0 media at this time. If he or she were, there would be a new set of online tools tomorrow.

Familiarity with a few sites and knowledge of the core ten commonalities of Web 2.0 offerings is the best way to manage these learning opportunities. That, and being open at all times to the expertise of students, who may be more familiar with a given web site.

Technology overload is our life now, and these new tools inevitably add to the burden. However, a sensible, yet adventurous approach can make teaching with computers quite exciting and satisfying. ■

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John Allan (www.edtechisus.com) has been involved in the TESOL profession for more than 20 years as a teacher, writer, presenter, trainer and materials developer. In his spare time, he blends Web 2.0 activities into the Moodle LMS.

Stephen Roney (CNA-Qatar) has been in TESOL for 16 years. Before that, he was a software designer, professional writer and editor. He is a former president of the Editors' Association of Canada. He currently teaches and handles CALL for the College of the North Atlantic in Qatar.

Over 1700 more resources at: www. AllMyFaves.com

Other resources include:

- **VisualThesaurus**
- **Authorstream**
- **Blogger**
- **Epals**
- **21classes**
- **PBwiki**
- **Wikipedia**
- **ToonDoo**
- **Myheritage**
- **Kartoo**
- **Synthasite**

The fast-paced proliferation of useful sites is overwhelming.

If teachers remind themselves that they do not need to know them all but simply understand the nine commonalities, they can use any of these resources, with a little practice, to enhance learning and teaching.

Resources

Name	Description	URL (web address)
21classes	virtual classrooms	www.21classes.com
AllMyFaves	visual link homepage	www.allmyfaves.com
Ask500People	polling the world	www.ask500People.com
Authorstream	visual media sharing	www.authorstream.com
Blogger	blogging	www.blogger.com
Delicious	social bookmarking	www.delicious.com
Docstoc	professional document sharing	www.docstoc.com
Ehow	knowledge resource	www.ehow.com
Epals	electronic writing & reading	www.epals.com
FaceBook	social community	www.facebook.com
Flickr	photosharing	www.flickr.com
Forvo	pronunciation & listening	www.forvo.com
Kartoo	visual search	www.kartoo.com
Mind42	mind mapping/brain storming	www.mind42.com
Myheritage	categorization/family trees	www.myheritage.com
MySpace	vanity websites	www.myspace.com
PBwiki	wiki	www.pbwiki.com
Photobucket	photo sharing resource	www.photobucket.com
Picnik	image/photo editor	www.picnik.com
SlideShare	presentation sharing	www.slideshare.com
Synthasite	website editor	www.synthasite.com
TeacherTube	education video sharing	www.teachertube.com
ToonDoo	comic strip creator	www.toondoo.com
VisualThesaurus	visual thesaurus	www.visualthesaurus.com
VoiceThread	media discussion	www.voicethread.com
Wikipedia	encyclopedia	www.wikipedia.com
Writeboard	wiki	www.writeboard.com

IN THE CLASSROOM

Teaching communication through literature

By Roslyn Maian

Most, if not all, teachers of English love the written word. Many of us have also come from a background where attachment to the language and its literature is deeply embedded, and where we have savoured its pleasures. If we can transmit this feeling to students, we not only give them the gift of our rich literary heritage but help them to broaden their own communication skills.

As educators of ESL adults we must focus first on our students' need and desire to communicate. Success in this will enable them to share the richness of their own experience and help unlock their emotions—the pain, joy, fear, and elation—which reveal what it means to be human—but in a new language.

Our students' life experiences are not just a sequence of events; they are processes which involve doing, seeing and feeling. In their new country, where they struggle to speak the language with ease and comfort, many ESL adults become frustrated, realizing that they lack the tools to satisfy the natural imperative to communicate. Surely our mission as teachers, then, is to help them acquire those tools. Otherwise, they will simply find a friend, relative or acquaintance from "home" and restrict their communication to their native language.

As ESL teachers, we are immersed in a sea of learning materials. Every season, new books, CDs, DVDs, and computer programs appear, covering verb tenses, collocations, vocabulary, paragraph writing, spelling conventions, idioms and so on. A constant challenge is to remind ourselves that we are teaching communication not linguistics. All the grammar, the punctuation, the summary writing and essays are simply structures and forms within which and upon which we build communication.

In the process of enabling communication we cannot miss important ingredients such as the message, the context, and the personal meaning. We must teach the forms and rules, yes—but the larger goal must always be to assist students in their quest to communicate. Classroom lessons are simply an aid; they are not ends unto themselves.

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Classroom experiences and materials

Our students have their own meanings and authenticity within. With effective teaching, however, we can help students create new and personal meanings, building on what they have seen, heard, felt, and done before. From this they can be freed to imagine and dream, drawing upon their knowledge and feelings about people, the world, their cultures and ours. Such an atmosphere transforms a dull, predictable and repetitive classroom experience into something dynamic and self-renewing, a place which stimulates self-expression rather than hinders it.

To help realize such goals, one important tool is to teach the vocabulary of feelings and emotions, then support that learning by seeking out stimulating resources packed full of information, interesting words, and emotion. Good materials help provide the stimulus as well as the freedom to be creative. Fundamental in this, of course, is finding universal topics and themes which resonate across cultures and genders, transcending borders and differences.

Where can you find these magical resurces? The answer is as simple as it is obvious. Look to literature, to the enduring classics, to writing which, in its cross-cultural appeal, continues to speak to all of us.

Using Classic Literature

A classic speaks to our hearts and souls with the power to entertain, inspire and educate all at once. Classic literature may be books your mother wept over as she read them to you and over which your children wept when you read to them. The classics explore universal themes and archetypes of human experience: love, betrayal, heroism, friendship, loss, and the quest for personhood, wholeness, or eternal life.

The well-told classic story reveals motives, plots and situations; it leaps from the page, informing us about the human condition. It taps into our shared humanity, no matter our country of origin, religion or ethnicity. Because the characters' emotions, thoughts and reactions are universal they work with ESL learners.

Classic literature also reveals social, cultural, historical and economic truths and conditions. It explains our traditions, customs and practices. It provides an opportunity to draw us together and teach our cultural myths, historical facts, societal norms and truths, and the realities which flow from them.

The students in our classes are hungry to know what makes us tick. They want to understand our cultural practices, our ways of doing things, the meanings of our daily actions and behaviours, our attitudes towards children, women, the elderly, the handicapped, to money and property.

They find the answers to their questions in our literature. The explanation of who we are permeates our great works and is revealed in our historic struggles. In fact, our Canadian attitudes to freedom and the rule of law, both of which are often missing in their own life experience, has drawn many of our students to us in the first place.

Finally, classic literature helps students appreciate the power and beauty of the written word. A good author reveals important truths and conveys emotion by weaving carefully crafted words and ideas into a work of art. In classic literature, the ESL student hears and reads our language at its best.

Methodology, media and language learning

The language teaching methodology *Suggestopedia* rests on the belief that the key to opening up people's mental powers lies in achieving the right mental state. This philosophy further holds that people are most receptive to new learning when they feel happy and relaxed. The notion is that if people can be brought to this state they begin to use mental abilities they don't ordinarily access and their language learning will be enhanced. In this approach to teaching and learning, music, for example, plays an important role, as it helps to relax the body and activate the brain.

The medium of film can also support language learning. Enhanced by music, films and video clips scaffold the learning experience. In the case of literature, for example, by viewing a movie version of a classic novel already studied in class, students

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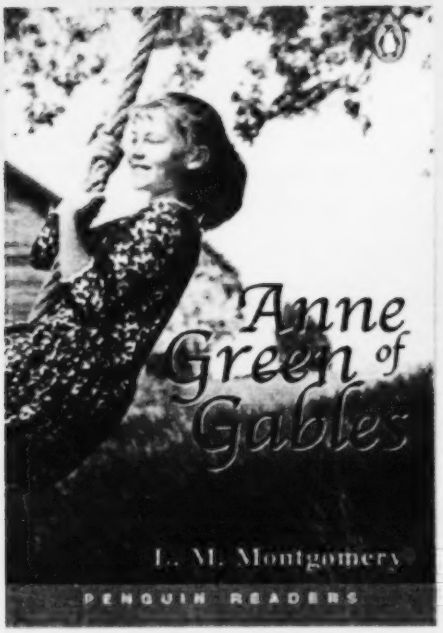
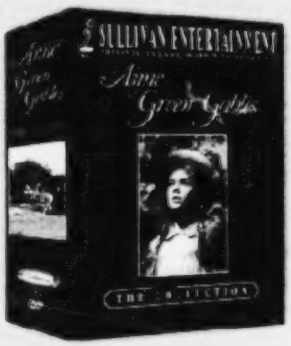


Anne of Green Gables by Lucy Maud Montgomery is well known as a classic, and not only in Canada. Written 100 years ago, it has sold over 50 million copies and been translated into 36 different languages. *Anne* has the power to delight, entrance and excite. Most teachers find that when learners get 'hooked' on literature, they arrive on time in the morning, knowing they will laugh together, weep and cheer. *Anne* is also an effective vehicle for pre-reading and pre-writing discussion, grammar discoveries, listening, and a real speaking tool.

Start with the ESL *Easy Reader* and use some of its accompanying activities and exercises, or use a children's version appropriate in level for your students. Sullivan Entertainment also has a five-disc collection which chronicles all of Anne's adventures. The sequel movie is particularly enriching with its lovely music, beautiful Maritime and Ontario scenery and captivating story. At approximately ½ hour a day, this movie will engage you for at least two weeks in the classroom.



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are helped to re-vision the work, and can more easily communicate to others what they know and feel because they have already internalized the story. Such experiences also help them to put their new language to use, especially as they talk and write about characters they have come to know 'by heart'.

In short, if students' interest and curiosity are piqued and their emotions engaged, they learn English more effectively. Teachers who read to and with students, and view movies together also begin to see that the stories help learners to understand grammatical structures and vocabulary, because in literary works these are contextualized.

In my class, for example, it has been interesting to observe adult ESL students as they view the film version of *Anne of Green Gables*, a Canadian classic that we had already read in a shortened version. Their sensitivity and receptiveness to the meaning and power of the novel was evident as well as they deepened their understanding, but in a relaxed atmosphere.

I have had similar experiences with *The Last of the Mohicans* and *The Phantom of the Opera*. What is particularly telling is that many of my students have then gone to the library to borrow the book or movie to share at home. This is surely evidence that they're taking English into their lives, internalizing it as part of their identity.

Many of us teach in classrooms not arranged in the ideal Suggestopedic model, however. Fluorescent rather than natural light, bare walls and the lack of windows make the environment uncomfortable and draw energy out of the classroom space. What is a teacher to

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do in this kind of environment? One solution is to escape the physical limitations of the space by entering the world of the imagination through literature. There, our students can experience vast panoramas, inspiring music, and characters and ideas which challenge and delight, or remind them of people and places they have known.

Finding and choosing the classics for study

In choosing classics, you can rummage through your own (or your children's) bookshelf. Look for the stories that you loved best. Check out the ESL *Easy Reader* books as well. They are excellent abridgements, and most come with vocabulary lists, exercises, activities, and ideas for research and creative thinking.

If you can get your hands on the *Ladybird Children's Classics*, again there is a vast choice, including *A Tale of Two Cities*. My students have also loved *The Secret Garden*, and *Robin Hood*, *Jane Eyre* and *Wuthering Heights*. These favourites, which delighted us for generations, will also delight them. All of these classics come in various reading levels, whether you use the ESL *Easy Readers* or children's versions .

For movie versions of the classics, check out the local library and your favorite video rental shop. Many easy-read classics also come with their own CDs and cassettes. Who can fail to love *The Phantom of the Opera*, particularly when they have read it first as an *Easy Reader*, then watched the movie? So inspired will your students be to communicate they will want to share it with their families.

Your classroom use of literary classics will provide the opportunity for you to enrich the lives of your students while enriching your own. As you develop your favorites, (one story or theme can take weeks) you can develop your own writing, speaking and grammar exercises, too. You will discover the stories that work and the ones which fall flat Most of all, you will make your classes more interesting both for yourself and your students, and you will give them the gift of vocabulary and ideas to build and enhance their ability to communicate.

Audio, video, internet and book Resources for Classics

If you want to focus on Canadian history or culture there is a wealth of material.

The poems of Robert W. Service

The Cremation of Sam McGee and *The Shooting of Dan McGrew*, by Robert W. Service are available in fully illustrated versions by Ted Harrison.

You can also listen to *The Cremation of Sam McGee* on the internet in two versions.

- Beautiful version, with some photos. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6lBkuz1TlVc
- Sung by Hank Snow with lovely pictures of the Northern Lights). http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8yIqwyR1ays

Stories of Jack London

Listen and read along version of *The Law of Life*. http://www.manythings.org/listen/lawoflife.html

The Klondike Gold Rush

City of Gold, a film from the National Film Board by Wolf Koenig and Colin Low. This is a vivid recollection of the Klondike gold rush at its frenzied height. *City of Gold* uses a collage of still photographs to compare Dawson City of the gold rush, when the gold from its river beds flowed freely through the stores, taverns and dance halls, with the more tranquil Dawson City of the present.

In this 1957 classic film, Pierre Berton recreates those agonizing months during which would-be prospectors struggled through steep passes and wintry trails to reach the fabled gold fields 2,000 miles north of civilization. (21 min. 40 sec.) http://www.nfb.ca/film/city_of_gold/

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The Spell of the Yukon

Type *'The Spell of the Yukon'* in the YouTube search box at http://www.youtube.com for a spoken version of the poem, performed by singer Jim Reeves. (4 min. 20 sec.)

NFB film directed by Rita Roy 1996 (43 min. 10 sec.) http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zESPCjTN-6k&feature=related

With historic photos, paintings and photos of nature: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XvG1bIp7WP8

The Northern Lights – Aurora Borealis

NFB documentary film by Alan Booth, 1992. (47 min. 20 sec.) http://www.nfb.ca/film/northern_lights/

The Hockey Sweater – A Childhood Recollection

NFB animated film directed by Sheldon Cohen. Narrated by Roch Carrier, the story's author: This is a delightful animation with music, which can be watched again and again, as you discuss small town Canada, the relationship between the French and the English, our national pastime, hockey, growing up and societal power structures. (10 min. 21 sec.) http://www.nfb.ca/film/sweater/

Evangeline and the Acadians

This is a copy of Longfellow's poem, *Evangeline*, about the British expulsion of the Acadians from Nova Scotia. Besides the poem itself, this site provides you with background information, pictures, and everything you might need to use it in your classes. http://www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/library/digitalcollection/bookface.stm

Canada's Aboriginal Peoples

If you want to teach about Aboriginal people, you can start with a simple ESL easy reader like *Pocahontas*, which will provide the background discussions, exercises, and understanding of colonial times, for your classes. The movie, *Last of the Mohicans* is excellent. The scenery is beautiful, the music magnificent, and the story thought provoking. It is a student favourite.

The National Film Board of Canada has 52 movies about Aboriginal people: http://www.nfb.ca/boutique/XXNFBibeCSrdSrchResults.jsp?cg=4&kw=ABORIGINAL&ds=0&dr=20&st=AND&cpg=0

Websites

The Web English Teacher Resource

This site contains links to biographical and critical information, e-texts, and lesson plans related to specific authors (and many of them!). It even has some Penguin fact sheets for easy reader books.

http://www.webenglishteacher.com/litmain.html

O. Henry's The Gift of the Magi

The classic story: http://www.webenglishteacher.com/ohenry.html

Here is an example of a page on the author O. Henry and his story, *The Gift of the Magi*. http://www.manythings.org/voa/stories/

Anne of Green Gables

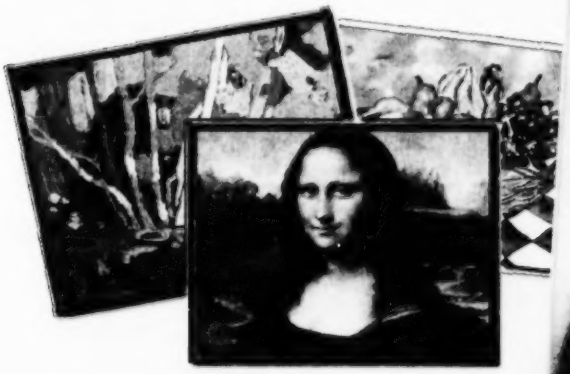
An online text of the book, *Anne of Green Gables*. http://www.cs.cmu.edu/~rgs/annetable.html ■

Roz Maian has a background in both TESL and law. She has taught EAP and LINC and has presented frequently at conferences on communication through language and literature.

IN THE CLASSROOM—LEVELS 3, 4, 5

Using art postcards for conversation and vocabulary acquisition

By Judy Pollard Smith



Every language activity has to have a purpose, a procedure and some positive outcomes.

The use of art postcards has lots of plusses. It is easy to do, takes little preparation, is enjoyable, and can yield the most surprising results. I always found that it worked better in the afternoon session of my classroom, when my adult learners needed something lighter.

In the beginning I must confess I approached the idea with some trepidation, knowing that some faith groups have reservations about depicting the human form in art. There has been little or no opposition to the idea; however I have been careful to screen out cards that might be suggestive or offensive in some way. The rule of thumb is to use good judgment in choosing pictures.

I collect art postcards from galleries we visit and I look for cards that will represent a number of different art styles, periods and cultures. In general, I shy away from 'abstract' art, although that may work for some groups of learners, particularly those who already have an interest in design, form, colour, texture.

By now my collection of art cards includes some American portraiture, some Canadian landscapes, some with Asian themes, and so on. Once I started collecting them, I just couldn't seem to stop.

Another advantage of using postcards is that once you build a collection, there is lots of choice and the 3" by 5" format makes them easily storable, easy to arrange in themes if desired, and good for individual rather than group work.

I was both surprised and delighted by the responses from my level 3 – 5 students. The activity seemed to stretch their linguistic limits. If they weren't sure how to express their ideas, they asked for new English words. But perhaps most importantly, they enjoyed what they were doing and it seemed to release language they did not know they had. ■

Judy Pollard Smith is an ESL instructor in Hamilton. Her interests include language, culture and cross-cultural communications. She is a frequent contributor to Contact.

EXAMPLE:

- **Who is she? Describe her.**
- **What is she thinking about?**
- **What is the book in her hand about?**
- **If someone made a picture of you in this style, what book would you hold in your hand?**
- **Why do you think she is dressed like that?**
- **Is she going to go somewhere? Where is she going?**
- **Do you think a man or a woman painted this picture? Why do you think that?**
- **Do you think she has a job?**
- **What made her special enough that the artist wanted to paint her picture?**

Portrait: Lady With a Red Hat – portrait of Vita Sackville West. Oil on canvas. By William Strang (1859-1921) c. Glasgow City Council (Museums)

Procedure

Lay the cards out on a table for viewing or send around a box of cards.

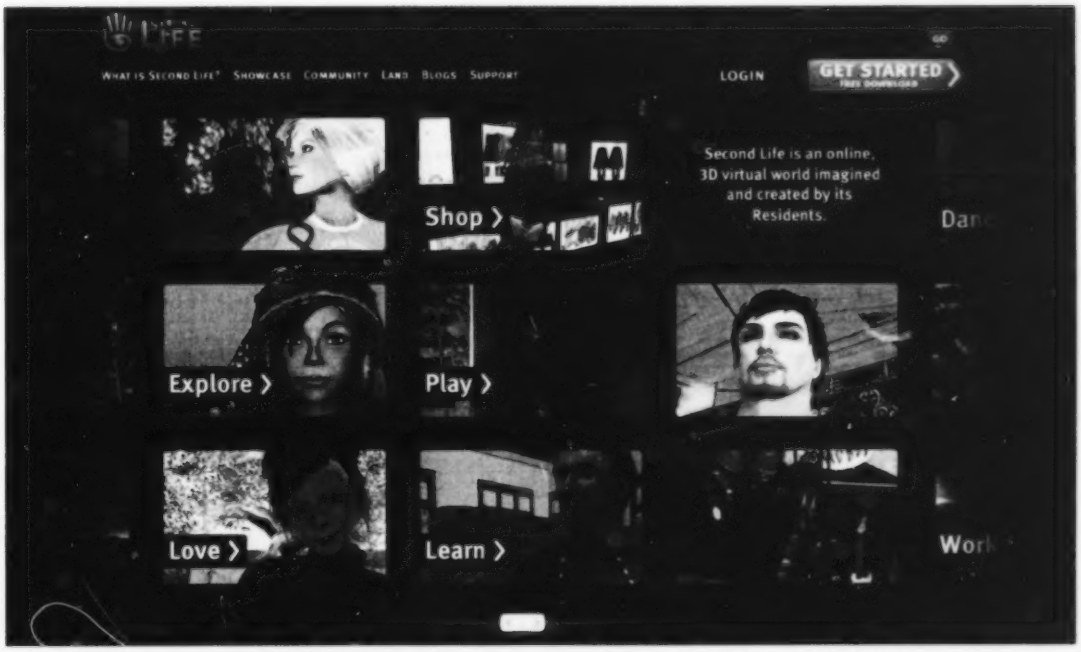
The students quickly choose one or two cards that appeal to them for whatever reason. It's interesting to see their choices. I ask various questions about their choices, going in turn around the room so that each one has an opportunity to express an opinion. This calls forth various uses of oral language.

Prompting Questions

1. If you were the artist, why do you think you'd want to paint this picture? (hypothesizing)
2. Can you think of a good title or name for your picture? (making generalizations)
3. Tell us about the colours and shades or tones that are in the picture. Why do you think the artist chose those colours and not other colours? (describing, inferring, expressing opinions, making judgments)
4. Write a paragraph or two about what is happening in the picture. Where is it happening? What is going on? Give a name/s to the person/people in the picture. Tell about their life/ lives. Are they happy/sad/excited/concerned/thoughtful? (imagining and composing, describing, projecting, organizing, sequencing)
5. What kind of clothing are they wearing? What does their clothing tell you about them? (describing, inferring, concluding)
6. How does the picture make you feel? (responding, explaining)
7. Tell us about your favorite artist in your birth country. (recalling, sharing opinions, stating preferences, justifying)

Virtual Learning Environments: Second Life

By Patricia Glogowski (Patrysha Drechsler SL)


WHAT IS SECOND LIFE? SHOWCASE COMMUNITY LAND BLOGS SUPPORT
LOGIN
GET STARTED
Second Life is an online, 3D virtual world imagined and created by its Residents.
Shop ›
Explore ›
Play ›
Love ›
Learn ›

(Article: http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Issues_in_Digital_Technology_in_Education/Second_Life. There is also a video at: http://blip.tv/file/1520905)

This article discusses Second Life, a virtual environment. The first part of the article gives a brief introduction to virtual environments and to the features of Second Life. The second part, Characteristics of Second Life, discusses the theoretical features of virtual environments. The third part, Uses of Second Life and Projects in Second Life, focuses on uses of Second Life for social activism, education, and language teaching and learning. The final section, Criticisms, Problems, and Limitations, includes a discussion of the most serious social problems occurring in Second Life and the constraints that individuals face when using it.

Introduction

Virtual Environments

Virtual environments are complex visual and audio-based immersive environments where individuals interact with one another via avatars or digital representations of themselves. These environments are quite distinct from Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Games (MMORPG). Whereas MMORPG are games where content is designed by developers and consumed by players, virtual environments are places where residents co-

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construct physical and social content through socialization and collaboration. The content of many virtual environments is constructed collaboratively by residents through creativity, invention, taking on identities, and experimentation. "Practices of the participants, their actions, conversations, movements, and exchanges come to define the world and continually infuse it with new meanings" (Thomas & Brown, 2007).

What is Second Life?

One of the more popular virtual environments that has emerged recently is Second Life, launched on June 23, 2003 by Linden Labs. It is widely popular with individuals in their early 30s (Generation X), and, according to the Kzero research group, it has 13 million registered accounts, which makes it one of the largest virtual environments (Virtual Worlds). Although residents do not need to own land, some purchase or lease parcels of land from Second Life real estate developers who in turn purchase the real estate from Linden Labs. Plots of virtual real estate in Second Life can range in price from US $100 to $1000 or more. Linden Labs lists three types of land: mainland regions, islands (private regions), and open spaces. Residents who are interested in buying land bid for it on the Second Life auction (Types of Land). Land is also available for rent; the prices are US $50 per region per day (Types of Land). Real estate trading, as well as other economic activities that take place in Second Life are done in Second Life currency, the Linden Dollar.

Main Grid and Teen Grid

Second Life consists of the following parts: the Main Grid where adult residents create their spaces and the Teen Grid which is designed for residents aged 13 -18 only. Adults who want to work with teenagers in the Teen Grid need special clearance to enter the Teen Grid and are restricted to their approved projects. Adult residents entering the Teen Grid need to create a new avatar which can be used on the Teen Grid only; if they use the avatar from the Main Grid, they cannot return to it once they leave or communicate with other adult avatars on the Main Grid.

Ownerships of Content

In January 2007, Linden Labs released its client source code under the GPL free software license (Embracing the Inevitable) which made it possible for residents to own the content they create. The physical content of the space, the ownership of objects, buildings, natural settings, or clothing created by the residents is in the hands of the residents, which means residents can own, sell, or give away the objects that they have created. They commonly license them under the Creative Commons. The possibility to own objects created in Second Life is one of the main features that distinguishes Second Life and other such similar environments from the MMMORG games where players do not own the content.

Second Life Characteristics

Distributed Networks

Second Life is characterized by distributed networks as its residents are geographically, demographically, and generationally dispersed. Thomas & Brown (2007) also suggest that the distributed networks are at the same time co-present, since for any interaction to take place, residents' avatars are in the same space.

Participatory Culture

According to Ondrejka (2008), another characteristic that makes Second Life unique is its participatory culture (a culture of interacting, sharing and collaborating) characterized by innovation and creativity. Participatory culture is integral for Second Life to function, as the social and physical content of the environment is collaboratively authored, preserved, modified, and maintained by its residents (Robbins, quoted in Arreguin 2007) through the process of what Yowell (Yowell, quoted in Arreguin 2007) and Thomas & Brown (2007) call "networked imagination." To explain this further, it is the collective or network imagination of Second Life residents that leads to the creation of urban and natural spaces where the residents congregate, and it is the collective imagination of the residents that

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results in defining the purpose to meet in those spaces. These purposes can range from social gatherings to educational initiatives such as lectures or workshops.

Social Interaction

Because it is the residents of Second Life who are the creators and developers of the physical and social content, the quality and complexity of this virtual environment depend entirely on residents' agency—their willingness, frequency, and quality of interactions. It is up to the residents to decide to what degree they become involved in this space. This, according to Ondrejka (2008), largely depends on residents' needs, desires, and constraints. It is also worth pointing out that - in contrast to interactions in other Web 2.0 applications such as blogging, wikis, or microblogging, which are sequential—the interaction in Second Life and other similar virtual environments is always synchronous.

Learning as a Social Practice

Because the content is co-constructed by its residents, Second Life is an environment where learning occurs through social interaction. Ondrejka (2008) labels it as peer-to-peer pedagogy, learning which is modelled on the apprenticeship model put forward by Vygotsky (Vygotsky, 1978) and which takes place in communities of practice created by learners (Wenger, 1998). "Rather than requiring learners to become proficient in all Second Life skills, students are encouraged to become dependent on each other's talents and strengths to the point of leading and teaching each other" (Arreguin, 2007).

Learning in Second Life is predominantly driven by the needs of the individual. Ondrejka (2008) points out that there is no pre-set curriculum and that learning is regulated primarily by the needs of the learners. According to Robbins (Robbins, quoted in Arreguin 2007), knowledge is pulled by the learners rather than pushed at a student. Robbins also stresses that the roles of the learner and instructor change as a result of this; the learner becomes an instructor and the instructor becomes a learner. Learning in Second Life occurs through formal and informal instances that include conventions, conferences, workshops and demonstrations organized and led by more experienced residents or through informal peer-to-peer synchronous voice or text chats.

Learning in Second Life is also supported by exchange of knowledge, expertise, and information through a mash-up of technologies that are used along with Second Life. Thus, Second Life residents continue to learn by interacting outside of Second Life by writing blogs, collaborating on wikis, joining Facebook groups, exchanging short comments on microblogging applications such as Twitter, participating in conversations on listservs, sharing images on Flickr, and sharing resources on del.icio.us or other social networking sites.

Uses of Second Life and Projects in Second Life

Social Activism

Homelessness

Since its launch in 2003, Second Life has been used for various purposes: social activism, politics, education, and professional development. An example of social activism in Second Life was a project that aimed to alert Second Life residents to the plight of homeless children living in developing countries. The project was launched by The Messengers of Peace Association (Mensajeros de la Paz), a Non-Governmental Organization based in Spain that works with needy and socially-disadvantaged groups in developing countries. This NGO created a homeless teenager avatar in December 2007. The avatar did not own any land and was living in a cardboard box stuffed with newspapers and a sign that said, "Help a child have a second opportunity in his First Life" (Doctorow 2006). The intention behind creating this avatar was to use the newest technologies to alert wider audiences to the plight of poor and disadvantaged people. Salvador Dinez, one of the designers of the project stated, "We think Second Life and other forms of new technologies can be a great way to connect with young people and make them a little more conscious about the huge population in the real world needing help, and it doesn't

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cost much to guarantee the future of another human being" (Doctorow, 2006).

Labour Protests

Another example of social activism was a labour strike organized in September 2007 in Second Life by Italian workers working at an IBM plant in Italy who were protesting a $1,377 pay cut. The labour protest took place at the IBM corporate campus and marketing site in Second Life that the company's UK sector has been using for developmental purposes (Au 2007a).

Politics

The decision by the government of Sweden to open its embassy in Second Life with the view to promote tourism and travel (to Sweden) was a perfect illustration of how important technology has become as a tool to reach wider audiences. Yet another example of political activism was the opening of France's New Front Party Headquarters in Second Life. This met with violent protests from the Second Life residents that involved virtual throwing of grenades, detonations, and setting buildings on fire (Au, 2007b).

It has become clear that Second Life is an important place for social activism aimed at addressing real life issues that have been traditionally dealt with in real life. Companies, governmental, and non-governmental institutions increasingly seek to establish their presence in this virtual environment as they realize that they can reach more geographically-, demographically-, and socially-distributed audiences.

Education

Universities and Colleges

Many universities and colleges have established their presence in Second Life either with pre-built campuses or by creating opportunities for students to engage in project-based learning. One of the examples is the initiative, "Stepping into History," developed by Alliance Library System in cooperation with Learning Times. The project was developed to explore the possibilities of teaching history in an interactive way with live talks and interaction with historical characters in re-created historical settings. This project is an example of shifting students' learning from text-based knowledge acquisition to learning in a highly-interactive multimedia environment where students can build their knowledge via image, voice, and live synchronous interactive exercises.

Other initiatives include the Ohio University Virtual Lab which does research on Second Life or the University of Cincinnati Second Life Community, to name just two. Individual educators have also started various initiatives to create spaces devoted to education. A good example of that are the Islands of Jokaydia, a self-funded group of islands that provides a space for educators to collaborate and explore how virtual worlds can be used in education and the arts.

Another example of educational development is the newly-launched Education Grid or the Global Kids Digital Media Project.

Medicine and Sciences

Medical schools are now also using Second Life for medical simulations. One example of this is the Ann Myers Medical Center. The purpose of establishing medical schools in Second Life is to train medical students and nurses through case presentations which are expensive or dangerous to perform in real life. Medical research and visualization of disorders have also been documented in Second Life. An example of that is the Visual Virtual Documentation of Schizophrenia which aims to familiarize medical students with the details of the illness. Research institutions have also established scientific research centres to create immersive science learning experiences. Some of the examples include projects developed by Drexel University and the University of Denver.

Language Teaching and Learning and Professional Development

Language teaching has not lagged behind in establishing its presence in Second Life. The British Council has developed a number of initiatives to build places for English language instruction in Second Life. The Second Life English group started by a language

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teacher in Germany has established itself at the English Village and has been operating since 2006. Its mandate is to provide free resources and support to language teachers and learners. A real language school, the Avatar Languages School, based entirely in Second Life offers English language classes in Second Life. The annual SLanguages conference (hosted within Second Life) is a 24-hour cornucopia of workshops, PowerPoint sessions and discussions, field trips, and hands-on building activities. The conference took place in May 2008 and again in May 2009. The event focuses on the use of Second Life and other 3D virtual worlds in language education.

Criticisms, Limitations, and Problems

Financial Constraints

One of the main criticisms of Second Life is the financial cost of using this environment. Establishing a permanent presence in Second Life requires substantial financial investment, especially recently when the land prices have increased (Linden, 2006). Land prices vary depending on the region and whether one owns or rents. In addition to land prices, residents also pay monthly maintenance fees that range from $5 US to $195 US depending on the size of their land (Knowledge Base). Linden Labs also states on its website, "To purchase land in Second Life, you must have a Premium account, current payment information on file, and your account must be in good standing (i.e. not delinquent). You may also be required to have a clean disciplinary record. Linden Lab reserves the right to refund your purchase if you do not meet our minimum criteria for land ownership" (Knowledge Base).

Another prohibitive issue that limits the use of Second Life are the hardware requirements needed to run the Second Life client software. This translates into a substantial economic investment that many individuals or educational institutions cannot afford.

Educational Constraints and Criticisms

In addition to these financial constraints, using Second Life for educational or other purposes presents a steep learning curve that involves learning how to function in the environment and how to build the physical content. In addition to basic skills, building educational spaces and bringing learners into Second Life requires creativity, time, patience, and innovation. Moreover, there is no guarantee that the content created by residents will be educationally valuable. A further criticism of teaching in Second Life is the misguided pedagogy of using Second Life and other new technologies to teach in old ways; some participants, for example, revert to a traditional, teacher-centred, unidirectional teaching mode simply transferred into a new electronic environment.

Ethical Problems

Misbehaving, Virtual Vandalism, and Griefing

Social misbehaving, virtual vandalism, and what's commonly known as 'griefing' are the most common social problems in Second Life. Those who engage in griefing are called Griefers because they create grief. Their antics are designed to interrupt proceedings in virtual worlds and games usually for no other reason than because they can. Attacks are triggered by a program code that generates self-replicating objects. Much like email spam, these "griefspawn" attacks can chew up system resources and slow down performance. They can sometimes even trigger network crashes (Jardin 2006). In 2006, a virtual assault by griefers took place on the virtual estate of a self-proclaimed virtual millionaire, Anshe Chung (Ailin Graef RL). According to the news report, in a staged virtual protest, "A torrent of pixelated male genitals rained upon the victim" (Second Life). Another example of griefing was cited by Michael J. Bugeja, Director of the School of Journalism and Communication at Iowa State University, who gave an example of cyber-shooting at the Ohio University virtual campus in Second Life. "Last May, in the wake of the shootings at Virginia Tech, a visiting avatar entered the university's Second Life campus and fired at other avatars" (Bugeja, 2007).

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Sex-based Economy

The most serious accusations and criticisms against Second Life are ethical. Most Second Life land is used for recreational purposes where residents engage in the economy-based activities that include gambling, nightclub hopping, and sexual activities and exploitation. One example of that is a news report run by a Hawaii television station that described a single mother who amassed a fortune running virtual brothels (Pai 2007). Another news report reported a number of incidents of sexual exploitations (Twohey 2008).

Child Pornography

Other accusations that have surfaced were those of child pornography. In response to that charge, Linden Labs issued a statement condemning all illegal activities in Second Life and warning about strict and irreversible punishments. In their response, "Accusations regarding child pornography in Second Life", Linden Labs indicated that sex involving minors and child pornography constitute illegal activity. They also state that residents are responsible for the content of the space and that such illegal activities are not tolerated. The punishment for two avatars that were photographed engaging in sexual activity (one avatar appeared to be a minor) was a permanent ban from Second Life (Linden, 2007).

Criminal Activity in Second Life

Michael Bugeja further points to the liability that educators face when they bring learners into Second Life. "What about a complaint by a student who agrees to meet the teacher's avatar outside of class but in-world and then witnesses or engages in an unwanted virtual act? Or a claim of emotional distress filed by a student exposed to virtual shootings, or any number of sexist, racist, homophobic, or offensive avatar behaviours? Who is responsible?" (Bugeja, 2007). Many questions have also arisen as to what constitutes and what does not constitute criminal activity in virtual space and whether criminal activity in virtual space can be or should be considered the same as it is in real life. Regina Lynn, a journalist for *Wired*, in her discussion of virtual rape, for example, makes the case against it. She states that virtual rape although traumatic cannot be treated as real-life rape (Lynn, 2007).

Punishment

Linden Labs' response to the unwanted sexual acts and other criminal activities in Second Life includes a series of punishments that range from warnings, suspension, and then banishment for life from Second Life. For the purpose of suspension, Linden Labs has created a prison simulator, "The Corn Field," where misbehaving avatars are locked up. The virtual prison contains one-way teleport terminal which does not allow an avatar to escape since communication to the Main Grid of Second Life is permanently cut off (Walsh, 2006).

Conclusions

Second Life is a complex, audio-visual immersive environment where individuals, represented by their avatars, take on new identities and create physical and social content in which they interact with others. Individuals' identities are replicated from real life, augmented, or significantly modified. An increasing number of researchers agree that engagement in virtual environments is supplemental to real-life presence and virtual identities are supplemental to real-life identities. Many activities taking place in Second Life serve educational and other valuable purposes. Many institutions have established their presence in Second Life to create highly immersive educational experiences that are too expensive, dangerous, or not feasible in real life.

However, social activities in Second Life have not always been positive. Some residents engage in violent, sexually explicit, and morally questionable behaviour. Although certain measures have been taken by Linden Labs to assure security and safety, this newly emerging social environment has not yet been thoroughly regulated, and its safety and security largely depend on the residents and their intentions. While Second Life has shown a lot of potential as

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a virtual venue for valuable activities, including education and social activism, some of its drawbacks cannot be ignored. It remains to be seen whether Second Life can indeed be the next great tool in education. ■

Where to Learn More

Australasia Virtual World Conference http://perth.norg.com.au/2008/06/04/cfp-australasian-virtual-worlds-workshop-2008/

Avatar Languages School http://www.avatarlanguages.com

Education Grid http://mediagrid.org/news/2008-06_Education_Grid.html

JoKaydia Island Blog http://jokaydia.com/

RezEd: The Hub for Learning and Virtual Worlds http://www.rezed.org/

Second Life in Education Wiki http://sleducation.wikispaces.com/

Second Life Video Tutorials http://wiki.secondlife.com/wiki/Video_Tutorials

SLanguages conference in Second Life http://www.slanguages.net

Sloodle http://www.sloodle.org

Second Life Educator's Blog (SLED) http://www.sl-educationblog.org/

Sim Teach Wiki http://www.simteach.com/wiki

Second Life Teen Grid http://www.teen.secondlife.com

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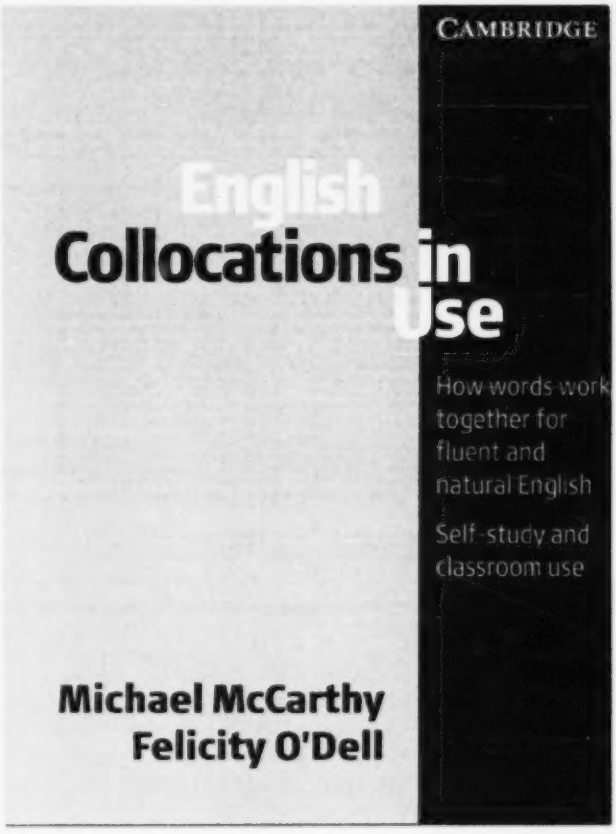
BOOK REVIEW

English Collocations in Use: How words work together for fluent and natural English

by Michael McCarthy and Felicity O'Dell

Reviewed by Evelyn Pedersen



English Collocations in Use: How words work together for fluent and natural English.

by Michael McCarthy and Felicity O'Dell. Cambridge University Press, 2005; 190 pp.

As the lexical approach increasingly permeates and influences the direction of ESL pedagogy, there is a growing interest in collocations, that is, combinations of words which frequently appear together. *A window of opportunity, groundbreaking research, widespread support,* and *a sharp contrast.* Native speakers don't normally give phrases such as these *a second thought,* but for learners of English such combinations need to be made explicit. *English Collocations in Use* seeks to help ESL instructors do just that with their intermediate to advanced students.

Like the popular *Grammar in Use* series, *English Collocations in Use* is organized into 60 two-page units. With the teaching points on the left page and an interesting mix of practice exercises on the right, each unit can be nicely covered in a 30- to 60-minute time slot, depending on class level. It is therefore ideal for classroom use, but with a comprehensive answer key and index (in 30 pages, this volume presents some 1,500 word combinations!) it is equally suited for self-study.

Units within the text are, for the most part, self-contained, and can be covered in any order. At the outset, however, are five units that serve as a foundation for all that follows. They consider the nature of collocations, types of collocations and register, dictionary use, and finding and learning collocations. As such, these units should be covered first.

The remaining units are grouped by topic—*relationships, lifestyles, work and study, travel, the environment,* etc.—but eleven units are organized around basic concepts, such as *time, sound, change, distance and size,* and *number and frequency.* For those who like the functional

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approach, the final ten units come together under the *functions* umbrella, and include many we would naturally expect— agreeing and disagreeing, expressing likes and dislikes, praising and criticizing—as well as a few we would not – starting and finishing, deciding and choosing, and claiming and denying.

Each of the items in *English Collocations in Use* is drawn from the Cambridge International Corpus, a collection of over 750 million words of English taken from authentic texts and interactions.

As if this database were not large enough, the authors also referenced the Cambridge Learner Corpus, a body of learner English taken from thousands of Cambridge ESOL exam scripts. Samples from this corpus helped the authors identify learner error patterns when dealing with collocations. Common mistakes are addressed in *Error Warning!* textboxes, similar to the usage notes found in many learner dictionaries. Here is a helpful one from the lesson on films and books:

> "Critics **review** books and films, NOT *criticize* them. To *criticize* a book or film means to say negative things about it. Also, remember that you **watch television,** NOT *see* television, but you can **see** *or* **watch a film** or **program** on television. We usually **see a film** at the cinema."

The *Error Warning!* in the unit on academic writing stresses that "We **do research** or **carry out research,** NOT *make* research." (How many times have we seen this error in student writing?!) Furthermore, "Someone **puts forward a theory** or **proposes a theory,** NOT *gives* a theory."

The text also includes helpful charts and tables, delightful graphics, and a wide variety of snapshots of English, including ads, dialogues, e-mails, advice columns, reviews, news headlines, interviews, job postings, TV program listings, and crossword puzzles. Here is a sample e-mail from the unit on accommodation:

> "Hi Julia, You're so lucky! I'd love to **move out of** my awful one-room flat. It's in such a **dilapidated building** . . . . . I want to buy **a place of my own** but there's a shortage of **affordable housing** here and I don't want to **take out a** big **mortgage**. I'd love to see your house. I hope you'll **invite me to** your **house-warming party**...."

So *to sum up,* here McCarthy and O'Dell have given us a thoughtfully compiled, *user-friendly* volume that teachers and students alike will want to *have close at hand* as they strive to *get a handle on* the collocations of natural English. ■

Cambridge International Corpus

The Cambridge International Corpus (CIC) is a large collection of English texts, stored in a computerized database, which can be searched to see how English is used. Compiled by Cambridge University Press over the last ten years it is an enormous help in writing books for learners of English. The English in the CIC comes from newspapers, best-selling novels and non-fiction books on a wide range of topics, websites, magazines, junk mail, TV and radio programs, recordings of people's everyday conversations and many other sources. It includes over 800 million words of real spoken and written English.

The Cambridge Learner Corpus, a collection of over 60,000 exam papers from Cambridge ESOL, shows real mistakes students make and highlights the parts of English which cause problems for learners. This corpus contains samples from 130 different first languages from 190 different countries. The exams currently represented in the Cambridge Learner Corpus include IELTS (International English Language Testing System), BEC (Business English Certificate) and the CPE (Certificate of Proficiency in English) among others.

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BOOK REVIEW

English Phrasal Verbs in Use

by Michael McCarthy and Felicity O'Dell

Reviewed by Tania Pattison

English Phrasal Verbs in Use

by Michael McCarthy and Felicity O'Dell. Cambridge University Press, 2004 (Now available in three language skill levels)

As I often tell my students, phrasal verbs are one of the most difficult aspects of the English language, right up there with articles and prepositions. You can, for example, *put out* the light, *put out* the garbage, or be *put out* by something someone said—all with very different meanings. The phrasal verb *make up* can be used to talk about cosmetics you *put on*, tests you *mess up*, or friends you have *fallen out* with—again, with completely different meanings. And, if you can *do up* your coat when you get cold, why can't you *do down* the coat when the temperature warms up?

How on earth is one to make sense of this chaos, let alone teach it to non-native speakers? To the rescue comes *English Phrasal Verbs in Use* by Michael McCarthy and Felicity O'Dell, published by Cambridge University Press.

Quite a few years ago, as a novice ESL teacher, I discovered the Cambridge *In Use* series, initially through *Grammar in Use*. Having been a fan of *Grammar in Use* for many years—and a fan of Cambridge's titles in general—I was excited to see how Cambridge would treat the topic of phrasal verbs. I was not disappointed.

English Phrasal Verbs in Use sets itself an ambitious mandate: to present and show the usage of some 1,000 phrasal verbs in common use in English; this is done through the presentation of 70 units dealing with phrasal verbs ranging from *allow for* to *zoom out*.

The main problem with any book on vocabulary is how to organize it. With phrasal verbs, the question becomes whether to organize by main verb, by accompanying particle, or by topic. The first makes sense in that all verbs with, for example, *look* are grouped together, giving us *look for*, *look after*, and *look up* in the same section. The second links all verbs ending in *off*, *up*, *with*, *around*, and so on. This means that *cut down*, *shut down*, and *put down* are grouped together. Grouping by topic, on the other hand, has the advantage of presenting the phrasal verbs in a more meaningful context... and, as we all know, vocabulary is best learned in context..

English Phrasal Verbs in Use takes the ambitious approach of, well, several different approaches. First, there is an introductory section that explains what phrasal verbs are and

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how they function grammatically. The authors touch on issues of register, explaining that phrasal verbs tend to be used in spoken or informal English.

Then, there is a section that presents the main verbs that are uses to make phrasal verbs: *come*, *get*, *go*, *look*, *make*, *put*, and *take*. This is followed by a section that focuses on particles; here, we learn about phrasal verbs ending in *up*, *out*, *off*, *with*, *through*, and others.

Subsequent sections are based around *Concepts* (time, location, actions, and so on); *Functions* (describing, giving information, persuading, and more); *Work, Study, and Finance*; *Personal Life*; and *The World around Us*. The advantage of the units in these sections is that they present the phrasal verbs in a meaningful context. So, in the section on Relationships, agony aunt "Auntie Jo" gives advice to couples who have *drifted apart*, *split up*, *fallen out*, and so on.

The examples are, perhaps, a little contrived—probably unavoidable when trying to cram 1,000 verbs into 70 units. Some are also representative of British English—not a problem for me since I come from the UK, but I can imagine a few Canadian eyebrows being raised at sentences like, "Well, he never studied; he just spent all his time *mucking about*..."

Typical of the Cambridge *In Use* books, the units cover a two-page spread, with explanation and examples on the left-hand side, and practice exercises on the right. This layout is one of the main strengths of the book. The examples are presented through everyday situations, including dialogue, email, newspaper headlines, problem pages, horoscopes, and so on. The exercises on the opposite page test both the learner's comprehension of the verbs and also his/her ability to use the verbs in meaningful sentences.

Cambridge promotes *English Phrasal Verbs in Use* as being suitable primarily for self-study. I have to agree. The layout of the book—explanation on the left, exercises on the right—makes it ideal for self-study. Students can pick and choose from this book, looking at a unit at a time, depending on their interests or immediate needs. The self-study aspect of the book is enhanced by the fact that there is not only an answer key at the back of the book, but also a very useful dictionary of phrasal verbs.

You can download this photocopiable two-page Phrasal Verbs in Use quiz online in PDF format:

http://www.cambridge.org/elt/inuse/pdfs/phrasal_verbs_quiz.pdf

This is not to say, however, that the book would not be useful in a classroom setting. Any course that emphasises the learning of vocabulary would benefit from this text, with the teacher perhaps choosing key sections to bring into the classroom. While I would not attempt to work through the book from Unit 1 to Unit 70, I can certainly see myself bringing in a section or two to supplement the lesson I am teaching.

As for the level of learner, the book is billed—rather vaguely, perhaps—as being suitable for "good intermediate" learners. When I showed this book to my own students, all advanced-level EAP students heading into degrees at the university where I teach, they were quite excited. Not only does the book focus on an aspect of the language that they clearly see as challenging, it also presents the information in a clear, logical format. Cambridge also has an advanced edition of the book, but this one is certain to keep most students busy for quite some time!

Yes, phrasal verbs are a bit of a nightmare; on the other hand, an understanding of them is fundamental to understanding natural, everyday English. As I often say to my students, just sit on the bus and eavesdrop on someone's conversation, and you will see just how common these things are. *Grammar in Use* has been a key text on my shelves for many years, and I can see *English Phrasal Verbs in Use* becoming equally valuable—not as a core text, but definitely as a book I (and my students) can dip in and out of as the need arises. ■

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Japanese and Canadian Cinderella Stories

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Literature like culture is universal; it is a reflection of a given culture but in some ways also shapes that culture. Some Jewish Old Testament scholars believe that the stories found in Pentateuch (first published in their existing form around 600 BCE) not only tell of the experience of the Israelites but through their transmission and (re)reading shaped them as a people. The same could also be said of the Quran, the teachings of Buddha, and the oral histories of many Aboriginal nations. Through its literature—both oral and written—young members of different cultural groups learn about their history, the memories and experiences that help explain who they were, how they have come to be who they are and, in some way, their potential for the future. The paradox of culture, however, is that it is simultaneously limiting and liberating.

Literature, as an expression of a culture, transmits its traditions, history, rituals, norms, myths, stereotypes, beliefs and values. For example, fairy tales from different countries reveal attitudes towards good and evil, gender roles, the supernatural, nature (including human nature), punishment, retribution, and so on. Most children when they arrive at school have had at least some contact with fairy and folk tales of their own culture and those of the dominant culture if they are not part of it (in some cases, minority children will have had contact only with the latter). They have a general idea of what happens in fairy tales. (Walt Disney has seen to this for generations of Canadians!). They know also that at the end of the story good triumphs over evil, but for this to happen the hero or heroine often has to undergo some form of trial or test. How clearly this is shown is exemplified in the books of Harry Potter! Given most children's familiarity with and love of literature, then, it is a logical step for teachers and others in education to use it as an entrée into multicultural and antiracism education.

Children's literature, both fiction and non-fiction, provides us with rich material to examine an endless list of universal themes: family, separation, immigration and settlement, friendship, acceptance, and prejudice among them (see Kezwer (1995) and Coelho (2003) for a more detailed list of themes and sources). As well, with the easy availability of literature from other cultures, it is possible for teachers

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Graph 1: Elements in Fairy Tale Structure: Conventional Narrative Framework

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nowadays to find any number of different stories on a given theme. The example that springs to mind, and the one that will be the focus of this article, is Cinderella, a universal fairy tale. In its many forms it is also an exemplary text for exploring topics such as stereotypes and gender roles, families, death and dying, rewarding good and punishing evil, the role of magic in its many forms, including the supernatural.

In the spirit of furthering Japanese-Canadian relations and in line with the mandate of the Canada Studies Centre in Kyushu at the Institute for Regional Studies, the International University of Kagoshima, Japan, this paper focuses on Cinderella stories indigenous to both countries. In the first part of the paper, we will look at the structure of fairy tales. We will then examine several Cinderella stories from Japan and Canada and finally suggest some learning activities for students at different levels.

The narrative structure of fairy tales

Fairy tales and folktales are found in the oral and literary traditions of nearly all cultures. The most popular and perhaps most universal motif, Cinderella, exists in over seven hundred different versions in countless languages (some scholars estimate that between 1500 and 3000 versions exist). While in most cases the underlying plot of the Cinderella tale is similar, each culture's version is different in that it reflects specific cultural traditions, values and world views depending on the context of origin.

In examining fairy tales from different cultures, researchers have been able to identify what they call the 'story grammar' or underlying structure common to this literary genre. At the beginning of the fairy tale, often introduced by "Once upon a time", the setting for the tale is established—the time, place and the historical period or context (e.g., the Edo period—1603-1867—in Japanese history). In one North American version of Cinderella, *The Rough-Face Girl* (Martin and Shannon, 1994/1998), for example, the story begins with "Once long ago there was a village by the shores of Lake Ontario." The next element of the structure is the identification of a problem to be solved. In the case of *The Rough-Face Girl*, the challenge is to find a wife for the 'Invisible Being'. Along with the presentation of the problem comes the introduction of the principal characters and a description of the context within which the drama will unfold. In most fairy tales the protagonists include both villains, who represent the forces of evil, and heroes/heroines representing the forces for good. The interaction of the two generates conflict which usually leads to some form of struggle involving supernatural forces, or a test that the hero/heroine must carry out in order to be rewarded. In the Japanese-inspired tale, *Lily and the Wooden Bowl* (Schroeder, 1994/1998), for example, Lily has to write a poem to be accepted into her husband's family.

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A key element of the narrative structure is the climax, followed by the resolution of the conflict, invariably with the triumph of good over evil. In most versions, the mistreated Cinderella character marries the prince or warrior and the atmosphere returns to normal. The fate of the so-called "evil sister(s)" or stepmother varies from version to version; however, they are not always punished, and sometimes even benefit from the munificence of the mistreated sister and her family. As we have said, there are many variants of the tale.

Four Japanese Variants of the Cinderella tale

According to Mulhern (1979, 1985) and Steven (1977) as well as other researchers, the Japanese Cinderella 'cycle' contains many tales collected from oral stories. They consist of three basic types, with the story elements commonly found in the four most significant tales as outlined below. These different traditions belong to the *mamaka mono* folklore—the stepchild stories, and many versions of each of the four traditional tales have been collected by different ethnographers. (Seiemon, 1660; Ruch, 1971; Keigo, 1974).

1. *Hanayo no hime* (**Princess Blossom**): gift child of Bodhisattva Kannon [a bodhisattva is a spiritually enlightened character] commonly known as the Goddess of Mercy); noble heroine abducted but spared death by assassin; aided by a mountain ogress; disguise as old woman; menial heroine as fire-tender at a nobleman's mansion; youngest prince in love; bride test; magic cornucopia; rencontre with father; stepmother exiled; happy marriage with many children.

2. *Hachikazuki* (**The Bowl-Bearer**)-Mikanagi variant: heroine disfigured by the bowl and box placed over her head by dying mother as stipulated by Kannon; magic adhesion; outcast heroine; bathfire attendant at a nobleman's mansion; befriended by the heir; cast into river by his father but retrieved by the love-sick heir; bride test; the bowl yields treasures; rencontre with father; happy marriage and great longevity.

3. *Ubakawa* (**The Bark Gown**): samurai's daughter runs away from home; refuge under Kannon's altar; Kannon bestows a bark gown and directs her to a warrior's house; fire-tending disguised as old woman; young son in love; happy marriage and many children.

4. *Hachikazuki*-Otogibunko variant: noble heroine bearing the bowl placed by dying mother as pledged to Kannon; outcast as a monstrosity; throws herself into river but saved by the bowl; bath attendant at the governor's mansion; youngest son in love; bride test; magic cornucopia; rencontre with repentant father; stepmother and stepsister abandoned in poverty; many children and prosperity. (Mulhern, 1953, 1-3)

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The first three story types described above are part of what is known as the *Otogi Zoshi*, which later became known as the 'Companion Stories' (Steven), variations of which are found in all Japanese folkloric literature from the north to the south. Number 4 above, 'The Wooden Bowl' has also been retold in a modern version, *Lily and the Wooden Bowl*, by Alan Schroeder (1994/1998).

These Japanese Cinderella tales, some of which date back to the Muromachi Period (1392-1573), were collected and edited in the late 18th and early 19th centuries by Japanese and—according to Chieko Irie Mulhern—Jesuit scholars, using the Italian Cinderella model (1977, 1984). Before discussing these different versions, however, I would like to mention one other Japanese version of Cinderella, namely *Benizara and Kakezara*, also known in English by the title *Crimson Dish – Broken Dish*. This form of the fairy tale was identified by Mizuzawa (1974) as belonging to the "*Nukabuku, Komebuku*" form. Tales of this type are characterized as follows:

The family setting is one where there is a stepchild by the former wife and a stepmother with her own child. The stepdaughter is abused. She is sent to gather chestnuts. In the mountains she is helped by somebody. The stepmother and her child set out to see the festival. The stepdaughter stays at home to do tasks, but is helped in doing them. She sets out to the festival and is noticed by a young man. A test is given the two girls, to choose which one will be his bride. The stepdaughter marries the young man, and those who opposed her are punished. (For the complete text see Kenichi Mizusawa ECHIGO NO SHINDERERA. Sanjo-shi, Niigata: Nojima Shuppan, 1964).

Characteristic Features of Japanese Cinderella tales

In discussing these tales, Steven denotes six common characteristics:

- Origin in the oral tradition.
- Anonymous authorship, with frequent modifications as a result of retelling and transfer from one generation to the next.
- Emphasis on events through fast-paced action, with little detail except at critical points in the story.
- Standardized expressions and repetition of key words for emphasis.
- Embedded moral and religious lessons: used by itinerant monks and preachers, with religious messages added to or integrated into the oral tradition.
- Shared features with traditional Buddhist narratives in both their origins and didactic purpose. (Steven, 1977: 304-306).

Steven and other researchers point out that these Japanese fairy tales were until relatively recently not well known, partly because they were primarily considered to be literary fare for women and children. Since many of them dealt with themes such as homosexuality and violence, they would have traditionally been judged more suitable for male audiences. Recent research, however, has been instrumental in making them better known and more available to the Japanese public.

Cultural and Moral Content

In examining Japanese Cinderella tales one is struck by how different they are in cultural and moral content from the versions presented by Perrault, Grimm and Walt Disney. In the latter, what is important in the central character is her outward physical beauty; to marry the prince the young woman needs to be beautiful. As Liu (1994) points out in her essay, "The Hidden Morals of Fairy Tales," beauty is equated with goodness in most western versions of the tale. Moreover, it is always a male character who

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dictates the essential qualities the woman must have to pass the test. The female character is invariably characterized as passive; she only has to look beautiful (and be able to dance!) to become the prince's wife. Naomi Wolf (1991) in her book, *The Beauty Myth*, aptly describes the importance of physical beauty in the construction of a young girl's identity (a phenomenon that persists to the present in using only beautiful women in ads for all types of products). In today's world, maintains Wolf, even though women have made breakthroughs in the work world, they are still trapped by the beauty myth: competence is not enough. Physical attractiveness is still an important constituent of their success.

Four examples of the Cinderella story in Japanese and aboriginal literature: *The Rough Face Girl*, *Naya the Inuit Cinderella*, *Lily and the Wooden Bowl* and *Sootface*.

By contrast, in Japanese Cinderella stories such as *Benizara and Kakezara*, and *Lily and the Wooden Bowl*, as well as in North American Aboriginal fairy tales such as *Scarface*, *The Rough-Face Girl*, and *An Indian Cinderella*, it is inner beauty, moral integrity and wisdom that are most important. In her introduction to *Benizara and Kakezara*, author Keigo Seki identifies a quite different and perhaps more profound moral centre to the Japanese Cinderella tale: "It is neither by beauty nor by having her foot fit a shoe that Benizara proves that she is superior to her stepsister, Kakezara. Instead, Benizara uses a skill not found in other Cinderella tales; she is a poet!" (Liu, no date).

In the tales, *Lily and the Wooden Bowl*, *Hanayo no hime* (Princess Blossom), and *Ubakawa* (The Bark Gown)[1], the women must also compose poetry to be worthy of marrying their lover. The women have agency and can decide when to use it. As well, in these tales the men in the stories fall in love with the women for what they are, though physical beauty certainly plays some role. In these versions, moreover, there are no fairy godmothers, and it is mortal women who provide the persecuted girls with the special gift which they can use, but only if they possess certain qualities; namely, that they are honest, faithful and good.

It is evident that the values found in the Japanese fairy tales are in sharp contrast to those associated with the Perrault-Grimm-Disney versions. The former encapsulate the ethos of the historical era in which they were developed, values that to some degree are still part of contemporary Japanese culture.

Before turning to the Aboriginal Cinderella stories from Canada, we turn our attention to note some other special features of Japanese versions of the fairy tale. First, in her article, "Cinderella and the Jesuits: an *Otogizoshi* Cycle as Christian Literature," Mulhern (1977) presents convincing evidence that

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1. The names used by different researchers to translate the Japanese titles are frequently different even though they refer to the same text.

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many of the Japanese versions were cast in the same form as Italian Cinderella stories.

> The Japanese cycle exhibits a remarkable resemblance to the Italian model. All of the Japanese heroines are called *hime* (princess or lady), take a long journey, work as a menial servant, and marry the young lord of the house. The most indisputable affinity are the peculiar Italian motifs: the old-woman skin in Italian variants is the human skin of a corpse or the dead mother's skin that disguises the heroine as an old woman; and the women's covering may be a box hiding the heroine and treasures, wooden dress, or even a wooden figure of the old woman. Hanayo's robe is apparently a modified old-woman skin: the *yamauba (old woman of the mountain)* says, 'I let you have the robe (*kinu*) I have just taken off in the summer heat. Please put on this *ubaginu*.' In the text with virtually no *dakuten*, this word, generally accepted as *ubaginu* (old-woman robe), appears as *uwakinu*, literally, outer garment or cloak. Similarly, the title of the tale *Ubakawa* (literally, old-woman skin) is written *uwakawa* (outer layer of skin), which is far more precise and descriptive of the robe made of tree bark (the outer skin of wood) in absence of any reference to an old woman. If the *Ubakawa* robe is a combination of the old-woman skin and the wooden-covering motifs, Hachikazuki's bowl is a veritable hiding place concealing her beauty and yielding her treasures in the end. (Mulhern:1977: 444-445).[2]

In the modern version of *Lily and the Wooden Bowl*, it is the dying grandmother who places the wooden bowl on Lily's head. In the earlier oral versions of the same story, known in Japanese under the name *Hachikazuki*, it is the dying mother who does this. In the process of recording and writing down these stories, it is evident that the written form has been changed.

Second, the wooden bowl (of possible Buddhist influence) and the outer dress or piece of cloth with magical powers—a common theme in Japanese folktales such as 'Crimson Dish – Broken Dish', also known as 'The Broken Dish' (an *Ubakawa* version)—are related. They are examples of objects that have magical powers, a common element in Asian fairy tales.

Third, an additional Buddhist influence evident in the tales is the role of Kannon, The Goddess of Mercy. In *Lily and the Wooden Bowl*, for example, the mother entrusts the life and safety of her daughter to Kannon. As the woman knows she is dying, she cries out for someone to protect her from harm, and as alluded to earlier in the four summaries of the Japanese Cinderella stories, Kannon appears and is thus instrumental in all.

Aboriginal and Inuit Cinderella Stories from Canada

Similar to Japan, Canada also has a number of versions of the basic Cinderella story. Most of the Aboriginal stories cited here have a similar form and content, though the geographical location and culture of origin differ. Nonetheless, the stories open similarly:

1. "On the shores of a wide bay on the Atlantic coast there dwelt in old times a great Indian warrior" in *The Indian Cinderella*, retold by Cyrus Macmillian; Mi'kmaq Indian Cinderella, Mi'kmaq vs European Cinderella Intro.mht;

2. "Once, long ago, there was a village by the shores of Lake Ontario..." in *The Rough-Face Girl* (Martin and Shannon, 1992);

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2. Not all researchers would agree with Mulhern's analysis, as many variations of the Cinderella stories were used for didactic purposes in the Muromachi period, there being some evidence that monks and nuns had been using them to teach prior to that period.
3. San Souci in his research found some 15 versions of this story in the Great Lakes (Algonquin and Ojibwa), the East Coast (Mi'kmac) and the Southern Pueblo regions with names such as the 'Invisible One', '*Oochigeaskw: The Little Scarred Girl*, and '*The Algonquin Cinderella*'.

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3. "Once, an Ojibwa man whose wife had died raised three daughters alone. They lived in a village beside a lake, deep in the forest" in *Sootface: An Ojibwa Cinderella Story.* (San Souci and San Souci, 1994)[3]

The story line for these three is as follows:

In this Algonquin Indian version of the Cinderella story, two domineering sisters set out to marry the 'rich, powerful, and supposedly handsome' Invisible Being, first having to prove that they can see him. They cannot, but their mistreated younger sister, the Rough-Face Girl—so called because the sparks from the fire have scarred her skin—can, for she sees his 'sweet yet awesome face' all around her. He then appears to her, reveals her true hidden beauty and marries her. (http://search. barnesandnoble.com/The-Rough-Face-Girl/Rafe-Martin/e/9780698116269)

Martin (1996) in his thesis on Aboriginal world views points out the close association that exists between a people's worldview and its culture.

> World views form the deep structures or fundamental presuppositions which constitute the basis of any culture. World views are formed through the relationships human beings have with one another and the natural world. World views are often experienced at a preconscious level and provide a way for human beings to interpret the realities around them. As such, a world view provides the foundation of the languages, beliefs, practices, values, and knowledge of any culture. The relationship between aboriginal peoples and nature is a central feature of their world views. It provides the foundation for the relationships aboriginal peoples have to one another and to the spiritual entities which inhabit their universe. Many aboriginal peoples of Canada have a close and enduring relationship with the natural world. While nature's gifts ensure human survival, aboriginal peoples also understand and value the natural world as a manifestation of the sacred. For example: the typical traditional American Indian attitude was to regard all features of the environment as enspirited. These entities possessed a consciousness, reason, and volition, no less intense and complete than a human being's. The Earth itself, the sky, the winds, rocks, streams, trees, insects, birds and all other animals therefore had personalities and were thus as fully persons as other human beings.

In Table 1 (page 44) , the differences between Aboriginal and European world views clearly show the contrasting emphases the two cultures place on different elements.

The cultural values of both non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal peoples of North America are also found in their myths, stories and legends, most of which have been passed on orally from one generation to another. In the case of Aboriginal cultures, only a few of these stories have been written. In fact, the Cinderella motif, the most common fairy tale, is present in the literature of a number of Aboriginal groups in slightly different forms, but with no slipper, no ball, no glitz.

In Martin's (1994/1998) version, *The Rough-Face Girl*, the Invisible Being differs from the Prince of most Cinderella tales, as he is personified as the world at large in his village, the society in which the Invisible Being is a part of the cosmos. Martin describes his society and its surrounding with the emphasis on nature, not on wealth and possessions. There are "pictures of the sun, moon, stars, plants, trees, and animals" painted in the wigwams showing what the Invisible Being values in his village (Martin, p.1). The Rough-Face Girl, unlike all the other villagers, "saw the great beauty of the earth and skies spreading before her" (Martin, p. 8). This evidently shows how she also appreciates nature and life for its aesthetic qualities.

In Martin's version of Cinderella, the test is based on wisdom. To become the partner of the 'Invisible Being', young Aboriginal women must answer three questions. The first question tests their honesty: "If you want to marry my brother you have to have seen him. Tell me, have you seen the Invisible Being?" The two sisters of the Rough-Face Girl lie to the Invisible Being's sister; however, the Rough-Face Girl tells the truth by saying, "...wherever I look, I see his face" to her own father. The second and third questions test for wisdom in the aesthetics of nature. The second question is, "What's his bow made of?" The Rough-Face Girl answers, "...why, it is the great curve of the Rainbow". The third question, "What's

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Table 1: Jagged world views colliding: Leroy Little Bear

ABORIGINAL PHILOSOPHY	EUROPEAN PHILOSOPHY
Space is more important than time	Time is more important than space
Cyclical view of world (constant motion)	Linear view of world
Verb-rich language (action-oriented)	Content-based
Dichotomies are rare in language	Dichotomies (good/bad) reinforce universalism
Creation is continuity	Creation is static
Context specific	Universalist
Spider web of relations: interconnected/ balance	
Non-interference unto others	Universalism justifies interference
Depend on each other's truth to create the whole	Truth is objective and must be striven for
Collective decision making	Hierarchical social order (since only one truth)
Education through storytelling, actual experience	Objective body of knowledge (oxymoron)
Diversity is the norm (law is the culture)	Social control ensures minimal diversity.

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the runner of his sled made of?" she answers by looking up into the night sky, saying, "Why, it is the Spirit Road, the Milky Way of stars that spreads across the sky!"

In *The Rough-Face Girl,* as in the two other Aboriginal Cinderella stories, the test was based on the young woman's knowledge and honesty. The women are active participants, not passive like the women are in the Perrault-Grimm-Disney versions. Moreover, in the Aboriginal versions the young women are not clad in fancy clothes, since external appearance is not an important aspect of their identity. Neither is the fact that they end up being beautiful at the end of the story of substantive value.

Naya, The Inuit Cinderella

Naya contains elements common to both the Disney Cinderella and Aboriginal version, as well as the Japanese Cinderellas. The text, presented in the form of a play can be found at www.gov.nu.ca/education/eng/css/curr/7-/English/Gr%207%20Modules/Readers%20Theatre.pdf. Naya, unlike her two other sisters prefers to live on the land with her grandfather according to the traditional Inuit way of life. To go to the annual party, Naya needs to prepare a dress but has little material to do so, though her two sisters go to Yellowknife to have dresses made. Her grandfather says that he will go on the land and kill a caribou so that she can use the skins to make her dress. Her grandfather also needs to bring meat to the celebration.

When her grandfather's hunting partner dies, Naya decides that it is more important to help him hunt than go to the party, especially since she sees her dress made of caribou skin as being too plain. After a successful hunt, Naya puts on her dress but insists she will not go to the party. However, when she steps outside the igloo, the northern lights swirl around her and her dress becomes covered with beautiful bead work. Just then, a team of huskies appears and takes her off to the party. She is so beautiful that no one recognizes her. A young hunter is taken with her and they spend the night dancing together. When Naya

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remembers that she had not told her grandfather where she was, she rushes to see him. As she does so, her dress returns to its original state and the dogs and sled disappear.

The hunter is determined to find Naya but does not know her name. When he consults an elder, he is told that the beadwork on Naya's dress could only have been done by one person, her grandmother. With this knowledge, he sets out to find her and when he does, asks her grandfather's permission to marry her. It is granted, they marry, and live happily ever after.

Learning Activities based on Fairy Tales

Below are a number of learning activities that can be used with the fairy tales presented in this text and others that students may find or bring in to class.

1. Have students discuss their prior knowledge of fairy tales. Record their ideas on chart or chalkboard.
2. Ask students to compare the main elements of other stories they know to the main elements of a fairy tale.
3. Identify the elements of all stories: title, setting, characters, problem and solution.
4. Apply these story elements to fairy tales: title, beginnings (Once upon a time), evil vs. good, lesson and endings (And they lived happily ever after).
5. Ask students to share their knowledge of story characters they know, such as the hero or heroine and apply this knowledge to previously learned elements of a fairy tale.
6. Make a character map, charting as much detail as they can recall.
7. Collect a number of different versions of Cinderella from around the world (internet search). What elements do they have in common? Chart this information.
8. Find and discuss the common themes in all the Cinderella stories.
9. Take one of the stories and sequence the events in it (first, next, last).
10. In teams, write and act out a play of their favourite version of Cinderella.
11. Select a version of Cinderella to be read to the class. (or choose two or three with different endings), e.g.: *Cinderella*, by Charles Perrault, retold by Amy Ehrlich ; *The Rough-Face Girl*, by Rafe Martin and David Shannon; *Lily and the Wooden Bowl by Alan Schroeder.*
12. Before reading, ask students them to predict will happen in the particular story they have chosen. It might be a good idea to begin with a version of Cinderella that they know.
13. Compare their predictions with the actual story.
14. Read the story again and ask students to find favourite words or expressions or words they do not understand. Assist with the vocabulary and the overall plot of the story; use the knotted string technique to check comprehension.
15. As a class project or in small groups complete a Story Map or Plot Diagram for the story (if students are not able to write, this could be a type of Language Experience-students dictate and teacher writes). Compare the story maps (if done in groups) created by each group—hang them on the walls. Discuss the different versions with the students.
16. Use one of the story maps for a language experience approach (cut the story events or story

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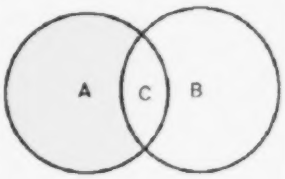
sections up in strips and ask students to put the strips order)

17. Story Charts. Provide each student with a story chart like the one below and ask them to complete it for the story you have just read. Alternatively, have pairs or even small groups complete the chart.

NAME:
STORY TITLE
SETTING
CHARACTERS
PROBLEM /DILEMMA
MAJOR EVENTS (INCLUDING TEST)
CONCLUSION

18. Provide students with a list of different Cinderella stories (available on the web in many different languages).
19. Students can present their self-chosen book and story map to the class, post it on the wall or exchange it with fellow students (could also be done as a group project)
20. Once the students/groups have completed their story map, they can compare the Cinderella story they have done with the one that was done in class in the beginning.
21. Students who are less confident and verbal could draw a picture (or pictures) based on the story and write one or two sentences about it.
22. Venn Diagrams are made up of two or more overlapping circles. Often used in mathematics to show relationships between sets, Venn Diagrams are also useful in language learning for visually representing similarities and differences in characters, stories, poems, etc. They cam also be used as a prewriting activity to enable students to organize their thoughts or Textual quotations graphically prior to, writing a compare/contrast essay, for example. Elements shared by the two fairy tales. In the process of identifying the elements that are similar and different, students realize that cultures have different worldviews with accompanying sets of values. It helps them to realize that their take on the world is not the only one possible.
23. Create bilingual books. Have students write a summary of a Cinderella story from their own country in their first language, if they can. Students select a different story that they summarize in English. Students can illustrate the books with their own drawings or images captured from the internet.



A: Description of The Rough-Face Girl.

B: Description of Lily and the Wooden Bowl.

C: Elements shared by the two fairy tales.

24. Respond through writing, drama, art, media products: Assign students different parts and have them put on a play (can be a simplified version)Have students write invitations to the ball. Have

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students message/email trying to find the owner of the lost slipper message from Cinderella asking her fairy godmother for help. Have students design Cinderella's costume for the ball. Have students prepare a character chart for main characters. Analyze fairy tales for racial/gender stereotypes.

Quick analysis checklist for sexism and racism in children's books:

1. Check the Illustrations for stereotypes, tokenism and who's doing what in the story.
2. Check the story line: Standards for success, role of women and their standards for success.
3. Look at the lifestyles.
4. Weigh the relationships between people.
5. Note the heroes.
6. Consider the effects on a child's self image.
7. Consider the author or illustrator's background.
8. Check the author's perspective.
9. Watch for loaded words.
10. Look at the copyright date.
11. The choice of categories used will depend on the students' age and language ability. First, work through one with them, using a Stereotype Feature Analysis like the one below.

Fairy Tale	Heroes	Women's roles	Stereo -types	Loaded words	Author's perspective	Relation-ships	Loaded words	Date
Naya: An Inuit Tale								
Walt Disney's *Cinderella*								
Lily and the Wooden Bowl								
The Flower Princess								

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25. Analyze fairy tales for racial/gender stereotypes. Post-reading activities like the following will depend on the version of Cinderella chosen (*The Rough-Face Girl*).

26. Semantic Feature Analysis. Another method of examining and comparing fairy tales is to use what is called semantic analysis. The fairy tales discussed in this paper, along with other versions, can be analyzed using a structure like the following:

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Book Character	Has sisters or step-sisters	Has a magical person, animal or object	Slipper	Evil characters are punished	Has a party or ball	Marriage to royalty or nobility	Other
Lily and the Wooden Bowl							
Rough-Face Girl							
Flower Princess							
The Paper Bag Princess							
Yeh-Shen							
Sootface							
Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters							
Grimm's *Cinderella*							

(Continued from page 48)

Many other exercises and lesson plans for use with Cinderella stories can be found on the internet. In most cases they include content, methodology and resources and target a given grade or age level. A sampling of such lessons is found in the reference list. ■

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Appendix: Synopses and Comments on 'Cinderella' tales

The Rough-Face Girl

In an Algonquin village by the shores of Lake Ontario, many young women have tried to win the affections of the powerful Invisible Being who lives with his sister in a great wigwam near the forest. Then came the Rough-Face girl, scarred from working by the fire. Can she succeed where her beautiful, cruel sisters have failed? A strong, distinctive tale with art to match. *Kirkus Reviews*

The drama of the haunting illustrations, and of Martin's respectful retelling, produce an affecting work. *Publishers Weekly*

Rafe Martin lives in Rochester, NY. David Shannon lives in southern California.

Annotation

In this Algonquin Indian version of the Cinderella story, the Rough-Face Girl and her two beautiful but heartless sisters compete for the affections of the Invisible Being.

Publishers Weekly

In this Algonquin Indian version of the Cinderella story, two domineering sisters set out to marry the 'rich, powerful, and supposedly handsome' Invisible Being, first having to prove that they can see him. They cannot, but their mistreated younger sister, the Rough-Face Girl – so-called because the sparks from the fire have scarred her skin - can, for she sees his 'sweet yet awesome face' all around her. He then appears to her, reveals her true hidden beauty and marries her. Shannon (*How Many Spots Does a Leopard Have?*) paints powerful, stylized figures and stirring landscapes, heightening their impact with varied use of mist, shadows and darkness. His meticulous research is evident in intricate details of native dress and lodging. In places, though, he struggles with the paradox of illustrating the invisible--an eagle, tree, cloud and rainbow form the face of the Invisible Being in one disappointingly banal image. For the most part, however, the drama of these haunting illustrations - and of Martin's (*Foolish Rabbit's Big Mistake*) respectful retelling - produce an affecting work. Ages 4-8. (Apr.)

(http://search.barnesandnoble.com/The-Rough-Face-Girl/Rafe-Martin/e/9780698116269)

The Rough Face Girl, Rafe Martin. Barnes and Noble

Synopsis: Based on an old Micmac legend, Rough-Face Girl is the story of a young Micmac woman who in the midst of family conflict and hardship sees the beauty in the world around her. Three sisters are attempting to survive after their father's death. The two older sisters are angry and mean, mistreating their youngest sister, Dos. In an attempt to escape their plight, the two older sisters set off to marry the Invisible One. Only the woman who can truly see him will marry him. The Invisible One is guarded by his Sister, whose job it is to determine which woman really is capable of seeing him. After the two older sisters fail in their attempt to see him, Dos sets out on her own quest to marry him, with her sister's taunting her all the way. Along the way, Dos helps them heal from the grief of their father's death. Dos sees beauty all around her and consequently is able to see the Invisible One and marry him. Rather than reject her family she insures that they too will share in the goodness of her life.

Lily and the Wooden Bowl

This traditional Japanese folktale light-handedly reinforces the cultural ideal of respecting the wisdom of one's elders. On her deathbed, Aya contrives to protect her granddaughter, Lily, from worldly men ("I fear they will spoil your innocence") by extracting her promise to wear a wooden bowl on her head –always - in order to hide her prodigal beauty. Kumaso, a wealthy farmer's son, falls in love with Lily despite her odd headgear, but his wicked mother, Matsu, forbids their marriage unless Lily can make rice for 100 guests from one grain of rice. Lily's store of magical heirlooms goes head-to-head with Matsu's own sorcery, but Kumaso's devotion to Lily tips the scales. The moment they marry, Lily's bowl falls away, showering jewels on the couple-a fitting reward for their mutual obedience to Aya's last request. Schroeder's quietly expressive language and Ito's polished homage to Japanese motifs result in their own shower of visual and verbal pleasures. From *Publishers Weekly.*

http://www.amazon.com/Lily-Wooden-Bowl-Alan-Schroeder/dp/0440412943

FILM REVIEW

Heaven on Earth: Director Deepa Mehta's new film confronts domestic abuse

Reviewed by Sandra Garcia

Acclaimed writer-director Deepa Mehta sets *Heaven on Earth*, her latest feature film, in the bleak winter landscape of Brampton, Ontario. A hard-hitting domestic drama, *Heaven on Earth* has the power to disturb, depress and perhaps even outrage. It is a gritty contemporary portrayal of an immigrant woman trapped in an abusive arranged marriage and confused by events beyond her experience and understanding. Released in March 2009 by Toronto's Mongrel Media, it is now available on DVD.

The story revolves around a spirited and striking young Indian woman, Chand (played by Bollywood superstar Preity Zinta), whose arranged marriage to Rocky, an airport limousine driver at Toronto's Pearson airport, offers the promise of a brighter future in Canada.

The story begins pleasantly enough with comic touches that lure us into willing belief as we view bashful Rocky (Canadian actor Vansh Bhardwaj in his first film role) at the airport's arrival level, nervously anticipating the first sight of his bride. Their marriage ceremony two days later at a storefront Sikh temple in Brampton is so innocent and charming that we can't help but sigh, anticipating a fluffy Hollywood tale of marital bliss, or a slice-of-life domestic sitcom, rather like a half-hour episode of *Everybody Loves Raymond*. Perhaps they'll break into a Bollywood musical number the first chance they get.

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Stills from the feature movie *Heaven on Earth* (2008), National Film Board of Canada.

http://films.nfb.ca/heaven-on-earth/?fid=547

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Nothing, however, could be further from the truth.

The pastel-hued blandness of the film's early scenes suddenly darken during Chand and Rocky's one-day honeymoon in a soulless Niagara Falls hotel, when Mamji, Rocky's possessive and controlling mother, arrives on the scene unannounced, effectively breaking up the couple's first moment of real intimacy.

Chand's mild suggestion that they give up the room to Mamji and rent another for themselves, however, unleashes in Rocky such rage that he smacks his new wife across the face, sending her reeling. His shocking outburst proves, sadly, to be only the first of many from this sullen, mercurial mama's boy.

Back in the slushy dreariness of suburban Brampton, life in the family's overcrowded townhouse reeks of tension, anger and menace. Chand is at her wits' end as to how to fit into her new husband's multi-generational and much-troubled family, come to terms with her domineering mother-in-law, please the mercurial Rocky, and adapt to life in Canada.

Her distress is compounded when she is sent out to work for minimum wage (which goes automatically to her husband) and by a paralyzing homesickness for her own family back in India. Strong feelings of dislocation, fear and estrangement begin to impinge on her ability to distinguish reality from fantasy. Magical and supernatural thoughts and memories begin to cloud her mind, driving her almost mad. In a delirium she implores her mother to help her escape her Canadian prison and return to India.

From a technical perspective, the jarring disconnect in Chand's mind is realized by filmmaker Mehta's device of alternating scenes in black and white with full colour, contrasting the delicate balance of her central character's tenuous grip on reality with her wish-fulfillment. It is a visually and dramatically masterful effect.

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But it is the Indo-Canadian director's depiction of the mental landscape of the abused, where the only viable escape is through flights of disturbed imagination, that most distinguishes Mehta's film from much of the standard cinematic fare.

"My film is not only about an abused woman in an arranged marriage," says Mehta in explaining her approach, "it is also an attempt to portray what happens when the realities of a life become unbearable."

Following the film's narrative arc, at the laundry where she works, Chand is befriended by Rosa, a sympathetic co-worker from Jamaica, who gives her a magical root with instructions to prepare a potion that will forever end Rocky's violence and cause him to instantly fall in love with her. Whether the plan for the elixir works or not I will leave viewers to discover on their own.

One feature of writer-director Mehta's work is the presence of cultural myth as a powerful force in the narrative. In *Heaven on Earth* this element winds its way through the story in the form of an ancient Indian folktale about a benign cobra snake, told to Chand as a child by her mother.

The recurring appearance of the legendary venomous serpent in this story will terrify some, especially in a scene near the end when the film's star must actually handle a real cobra as an ordeal to prove that she has been faithful to Rocky. The intertwining of the supernatural and the mundane is a device seldom tackled in western films and for this reason its presence lends a freshness to the narrative.

Heaven on Earth is not a 'feel good' film. Its shocking realism is more rueful and acidic than the catchy, ironic title would have you believe. Director Mehta's graphic portrayal of spousal and familial abuse etches into our comfortable consciousness some realities of modern life that many would rather turn away from.

In a prologue, the director reminds us that the situations this work portrays are more common than we think, and she urges us to respond with greater awareness and action. In this sense, the movie has a strong social message.

Among its other features, the film presents English sub-titles for the numerous lines of dialogue in Punjabi. Thankfully, it refrains from overwrought musical clichés to trigger emotional response in the viewer, and through the use of realistic language, some of it very strong and even vulgar, further convinces of us its essential truth. And stretches of silence in the soundtrack have the effect of allowing the viewer to think, remember, connect and react. What more could one ask for?

If there are any quibbles I had with *Heaven on Earth*, one would be the suddenness of the ending. Another would be its length, at 133 minutes. Still, this new work by Oscar-nominated Deepa Mehta (*Water*, 2007) provides the viewer a thoroughly engrossing—often disturbing — take on a difficult theme.. ■

English as a Second Language week

December 6-12, 2009

Language for a Changing World

37th Annual TESL Ontario Conference

December 10-12, 2009

Sheraton Centre Toronto

For more conference information go to: www.teslontario.org

The City of Toronto and other communities across Ontario have once again agreed to designate December 6 - 12, 2009 as ESL Week in recognition of both those who have contributed and those who have benefited from ESL learning in Ontario. This public acknowledgement will coincide with TESL Ontario's annual conference: "Language for a Changing World" to be held in Toronto, December 10 - 12 at the Sheraton Centre Hotel.

Various events and activities will take place across the province to mark ESL Week. These include writing contests, spelling competitions, film festivals, special class activities, art displays and more. We have now posted the winners of the 2009 Poster Contest. Please take this opportunity to visit the poster web page.

We encourage instructors and teachers to participate in celebrating ESL Week by planning special activities in your classroom or organization. We are also interested in posting your ideas, pictures, or artwork on our website!

Email us your plans at membership @teslontario.org, or write to: TESL Ontario Head office located at 27 Carlton St., Suite #405, Toronto, Ontario M5B 1L2. We would ask that groups document their events as they occur, so that we can continue to promote ESL Week in future years.

December 6th - 12th, 2009 has been declared ESL Week in:

Town of Ajax, Town of Amherstburg, City of Barrie, City of Brampton, Town of Caledon, Municipality of Clarington, City of Cornwall, Town of Fort Erie, City of Kingston, Town of Markham, Town of Milton, Norfolk County, City of North Bay, Town of Oakville, City of Orillia, City of Oshawa, City of Peterborough, City of Pickering, Township of Scugog, City of Stratford, City of St. Thomas, City of Toronto, City of Windsor, York Region. ■